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MILDRED TUCKER

— by —

Mrs. Emma Spencer Barber



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MILDRED TUCKER

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BY

MRS. EMMA SPENCER BARBER

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EDITOR'S NOTE.

This simple little story, my first attempt, is written with the hope that it may be the means of helping our young people to see the great privilege and opportunity they have of making their lives count for our best friend, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

To all that have answered the call for life service, and to those who shall answer the call, this book is dedicated.

Emma Spencer Barber.

CHAPTER I.

It was a beautiful, warm day in autumn when the leaves were just beginning to change their color to brown and red, when two girls came leisurely down the hill where they had been spending the afternoon gathering chestnuts. They were neighbors, and lived on Russell Street, in the town of Richwood, Virginia. Marguerite Woodson and Mildred Tucker were very close friends and were often together. Although different in both looks and tastes they were very congenial, and would stroll away by themselves to talk over any matter of importance which might present itself.

Marguerite was tall, with beautiful brown eyes and wavy chestnut hair, and her chief charm was the bright smile with which she greeted every one. She was never too much occupied with her own interests to stop and speak a cheery word to children and older people, as well as those of her own age; and often the remark was made: "It is a blessing to come in contact with a character like that."

Mildred's eyes were deep blue; with fair skin and dimples in her rosy cheeks, full red lips which disclosed a set of pearl

white teeth, and her beautiful golden hair, she attracted the attention of those she met, and many turned in adoration to gaze at one so unconscious of her own beauty. She was not so tall as Marguerite, but was well developed in form and graceful in her carriage, and being the only child in a wealthy home, she had everything to make her life happy; yet there seemed to be something lacking, which Marguerite (although one of five children in a plain, comfortable home) possessed.

The difference was in the home training. Mildred's mother was reared in a home where servants attended to her every wish, and she was free to spend her time in whatever way her fancy dictated; Mrs. Tucker had felt Mildred too should never have a care, and had reared her in the same way. Mildred had finished college and her mother was planning to take her abroad for a year, and that was the subject of the conversation this afternoon. Marguerite also had finished college, and they feared that from now on their lives would drift apart, and were sad as they talked of the separation.

Marguerite's mother was a lovely Christian character and had taught her children to "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto

you.” Mr. and Mrs. Woodson at the beginning of their little home had set up their family altar, and this had been a great influence for good upon their children as they had come to bless their home.

Marguerite had at the age of twelve years accepted Christ as her personal Saviour; she had felt for some time that she wanted to give her life in service to Christ, and was only waiting for the way to open whereby she could enter a Training School and fit herself for her life work. Marguerite had often spoken to her chum about her hopes and plans, but Mildred had tried to influence her to enter some other field of work “that she might enjoy life,” as Mildred said, and not make so many sacrifices. Today as they talked of their future, she asked Marguerite if she still intended to be a missionary. “Yes, indeed,” Marguerite replied. “Mildred, if you would only accept Jesus Christ as your Saviour, it would be much easier to see you go so far away. I am sure you would be much happier, and each day, by service, you could be ‘laying up treasure in Heaven.’ ” Mildred looked very serious and, throwing her arms around Marguerite, she said, “Do you know, I would give anything in the world if my mother and father were Christians, and had a family altar, as yours have? There are some things wealth cannot buy. As I have been in your

home and shared with you one of the sweetest services which can be rendered to God, the family together praising His name—I have gone home heart hungry and have often wished I could change places with you. I have tried to persuade you to give up your intention of being a missionary, but now that I am going away, I want to be very frank with you and tell you how glad I am that you were true to your convictions.”

It was Wednesday night and as they parted, Mildred said, “Are you going to Helen’s party this evening?” “No, dear; I have an engagement on Wednesday evenings which only sickness keeps me from fulfilling. I feel that our prayer meeting is of so much importance, I cannot miss. Come and go with me?” Mildred hesitated before replying, but said, “I have already accepted Helen’s invitation,” but going a little closer to Marguerite she said, “I most wish I could go with you tonight. Some day I am going to settle this question and seek the deeper things of life.” Without waiting for a reply, she ran across the street and into her home.

“Is that you, Mildred?” her mother called. “Yes, mother. Did you want me?” “I was only thinking you should have rested this afternoon in order to be ready for the party this evening.”

"I am not tired, it always rests me to be with Marguerite. Mother, she is the loveliest character I ever knew, and I wish I were half as good."

Mrs. Tucker looked displeased and said, "I am afraid you spend too much time with Marguerite. She is too old for a girl of twenty and does not enter into the pleasures of life as she should."

"Mother, you do not realize how happy she always is; and I do not believe she would change places with anyone. In fact, I know she is always invited to the parties, picnics and everything, and unless it interferes with her church services, she attends (that is, except the dances and card parties), and enters into everything with so much vim, she is the center of attraction."

Mildred went to her room and threw herself across the bed for a little rest. She thought of the party and was surprised how little she cared to go, as she had always been so fond of dancing. She tried to think of the good time she would have, as she was a general favorite with all the young men and was very fond of Harold Childs, who was to be her escort. The words of Marguerite kept coming back to her, "Laying up treasure in Heaven," and she couldn't free herself from

the thought.

“If I should die tonight, I wonder what would become of me? Surely I have very little treasure, if any, stored away up there.” She fell into a troubled sleep and was aroused by the announcement of dinner. She hastily dressed and went down to join her father and mother in the dining room. Mr. Tucker was a big, broad-shouldered man, with dark eyes and hair. He was president of the First National Bank and was a very shrewd and capable man. He had many friends among all classes and was honest and straightforward in all his dealings. Mildred was the “apple of his eye” and to him she was almost perfect. After the dinner was finished he turned to Mildred and said, “Are we to have the pleasure of your company tonight, or are you going out?” She replied, “Father, I am going to Helen Gould’s party, but I will be home tomorrow evening and will sing for you then.”

Mr. Tucker had been reared in a Christian home and while not a Christian himself, he still enjoyed the family gathering around the piano and singing the good old hymns, as they used to do in the old home.

As he sat thinking over his life tonight and what wealth had brought to him, he realized the thing for which he had struggled had come to him, and yet it did not bring the perfect

peace and happiness he had expected. He was extremely fond of his wife and daughter. Their happiness was his greatest pleasure, but sometimes he wished that so much were not expected of his family socially, either accepting invitations or entertaining. It gave them so little time to know each other. He, however, never complained, but as he thought of the old home and how the four children, his brother Fred and sisters Nancy and Elizabeth, used to sit around the fire with his father and mother in the living room where there were games, books and music to enjoy, and perhaps some of the young folks from the neighborhood would run in to spend the evening, he could not help wishing that his home might be a little more like that. They didn't have the wealth that he had, and everyone had their work to do; but, after all, he thought, one is happier when they are giving out something to others, and feel they have a part to fill in this big old world. He was surprised at himself tonight as the words came to him, "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" He had often heard his dear old father quote this, and he had trained his children never to take advantage of anyone in a deal, or fall short in honor or honesty for any earthly gain. He had followed his father's instructions along this line and was a good, moral man; but tonight, as

he thought of his mother's early teaching of the meek and lowly Jesus, he somehow felt his need of such a Saviour, and determined within himself that on the following Sunday he would go to the house of God instead of spending the morning in his car.

Mrs. Tucker, who had been reading, laid down her book and went to the piano and, running her fingers over the keys, began to sing some of the old songs she used to sing before they were married. She was interrupted by the announcement of Mr. Childs, who had called to accompany Mildred to the party. Mildred came down looking even prettier than usual in her soft white dress with pearl trimmings. Her wealth of hair was like a crown of gold, and as you gazed into her eyes you felt the power of the soul which looked out through those windows. Mildred was a fortunate girl for she had inherited her mother's beauty and father's sunny disposition, and she made friends of all she met. Running over to her father and mother she kissed them goodbye, as had been her custom since a child. Then she and Harold started for the party.

CHAPTER II.

After Mildred had gone, Marguerite went into the house and not finding her mother downstairs she went to her room. Mrs. Woodson was a frail little woman and was compelled to spend some time each day resting; the doctor had told her on account of her heart she must lie down a great part of the time. She was very ambitious and this was very hard for her to do. As they only had one maid and a family of five, there was always a great deal to be done. "Mother, are you feeling badly?" asked Marguerite, as she came into the room.

"Only a little tired, dear; I felt I must rest awhile. Did you see the twins in the yard as you came in? They haven't been dressed for evening and I wish you would please look after them."

"Of course, mother dear. This is my work, and I want you to turn them over to me and not try to do so much. I will find them and have them looking spic and span in a few moments, although I will not promise they will look that way very long." She immediately went to find her two little brothers, Richard and Robert, who had just passed their eighth

birthday. She found them in the back yard doing their best trying to build a doll house for their little sister Ruth. They all ran to meet her and each tried to tell about the wonderful house they were building and asked her to help them. She promised she would on the following day and hurried them into the house to get ready to see Daddy and for dinner, which was nearly ready.

“Has Edwin come in yet, Ruth?” “Yes, Marguerite, he is in the living room reading.” Edwin was a young man one year younger than Marguerite and they were great chums. Mr. Woodson was in the wholesale business and Edwin helped in the store during his vacation. He expected to return to college in a few days. Mr. Woodson had come in and had gone up to her mother’s room, and together they came down stairs. Mr. Woodson putting his arm around his wife, helped her, for he feared going up and down stairs was too much of an effort for her. They were a happy family; love shone in their eyes as they gathered around the table and, with bowed heads, waited while their father gave thanks to our Heavenly Father for all the good things of life.

“What have you been doing today, Marguerite?” asked her father, as she sat on his right and helped him serve. “Mildred

and I were out in the hills where we had a good long talk and gathered a few chestnuts, although they are hardly ripe yet. Do you know she is to go abroad next month? I do so hate to have her go—and shall miss her more than I can tell; but it will be lovely for her to have this trip and study music while away.” “We will all miss Mildred,” said her father. “She is a lovely girl and I often think if she would devote her life to serving others, what an influence for good she might be.”

“How long will she be gone, Marguerite?”, asked Edwin. “They are planning to be gone at least one year, and possibly two.” Edwin looked down at his plate without replying; Marguerite looked up in time to see something in Edwin’s eyes which told her that he, too, would feel deeply Mildred’s absence. She had never thought of Edwin caring for Mildred except as a friend, but as she caught the expression which he was trying to hide, she knew she had guessed his secret; and in her heart she hoped some day Mildred would return his love and be her sister indeed.

After dinner Mr. Woodson said, “How many are going to prayer meeting tonight? Mother, do you feel like going?”

“Yes; I think I will be none the worse, when we can ride right to the door.” The children

want to go, and as Marguerite and Edwin always went, Mr. Woodson brought the car and they started. As they passed dear old Mrs. Randolph's house they stopped to ask if she cared to go. She was delighted to join them, and wished she could have the pleasure every week. They always made it a point to call for someone who could not go unless they could ride.

As they sang the hymns of praise and were led in prayer by those everyone felt were striving each day to live for Christ, they were lifted up and felt their strength renewed for another week to meet the trials and temptations of the world. After some brief testimonies where each felt free to tell of the things that helped or hindered, all felt "The Lord was one in their midst and that to bless." The minister turned to Marguerite and asked her to sing, "Just When I Need Him, Jesus is Near." As her soft, rich tones rang out and every word seemed to come from her heart, the minister noticed over to the left was a young man who was not a frequent visitor to the prayer meeting. As Marguerite sang the last verse he noticed there were tears in his eyes. As she finished singing the pastor gave the usual invitation: "If there is anyone present who has never accepted Christ as his personal Saviour, and will do so now, please

come forward;" and immediately this young man got up and started down the aisle. He had lately come to Richwood from his home in Tennessee, and as he gave the minister his hand and Jesus Christ his heart, he turned to the congregation and said, "When I came in here this evening I little thought I should make this the time when I would surrender my life to the Lord; but as the words of that beautiful hymn were being sung I could see my mother, as she bade me goodbye, saying, 'Remember, Charles, 'Just When You Need Him, Jesus is Near,' and I felt, surely I need Him now."

"I am so glad I was invited by Edwin Woodson to attend prayer meeting tonight; as I have listened to the prayers and testimonies, I felt you all had something which I did not, and I saw my need of a Saviour; from this time on I hope to make my life count for the cause of Christ." He was unanimously received for membership and on the following Sunday was to be baptized.

As they were going home that evening Mr. Woodson said: "I was so glad to see Charles Douglass take the stand he did tonight; you know, he is the young man I was telling you about, who a few weeks ago came to work for me; he is a good salesman and does his work well. I will ask him up to the house to spend tomorrow evening."

“Do, father,” said Marguerite. “He seems so manly, and I am sure we will be glad to count him as one of our friends.” They had reached home and Marguerite took the children and helped them get ready for bed.

After they had knelt in prayer she tucked them into bed and went to join the rest of the family. She had never spoken to them of the desire of her heart for she felt at present, while her mother needed her, her duty was at home; but as Edwin was going away in a few days she felt she would like to have a talk with him and see what he thought of her decision.

Her father was reading the evening paper to her mother, and she said to Edwin, “It is a beautiful moonlight night, would you like to take a little walk?”

“Sure, sis; it is some time since we had a tramp in the moonlight.” He grabbed his cap and arm in arm they started, and as they strolled along Marguerite told him of the desire of her heart.

CHAPTER III.

As Marguerite talked of her hopes and plans, Edwin was silent. At last she said to him, "Do you approve of my choice?"

Edwin replied, "Marguerite, I have only one objection. What will we do without you? I have always felt God would call you for special work as I have seen you over and over give up your own will to mine and your thoughtfulness of others. I want to say I am sure no one was ever better fitted to do mission work than my own Madge." He never called her that except when they were alone, and it seemed to draw her nearer to him. "Do you mean to go to the foreign field?" "Wherever the Lord shall lead me. I haven't yet spoken of this to father and mother, for I fear they will feel they must make sacrifices to give me training, and as mother is not well, I feel I should wait until she is stronger before I leave her. I can help her so much with the children; when they are older and I am not needed so badly at home, then I shall be so happy to prepare myself to serve others."

"I want to say this, sis; I am so glad you never speak ill of anyone, but find the good in every life. Many, many times when I would

me angry and say unkind things of someone, you would point out their good qualities, and you have helped me to overcome that fault to a great extent."

They had walked further than they realized and, looking up, saw they were opposite Helen Gould's. The young folks were keeping step to the music, and as Mildred whirled past the window in the arms of Harold Childs, Marguerite said: "I would give anything I possess to win Mildred Tucker to Jesus, and see her with her wonderful talents laying them at the Master's feet. Help me pray that very soon she will accept Him, Edwin?" Edwin was silent, and somehow he didn't seem inclined to talk of Mildred, although usually he was free to speak of her and her charms. They went a little further and Marguerite said, "Edwin, you have never told me whether you have decided to help father in business, or to follow a profession." "I have hardly decided, but have thought if I can be spared from home, would like to study medicine. That would mean four more years after this of hard study, and I am not sure I want to **now**." Marguerite noticed the emphasis on the last word but refrained from asking what had changed his mind, though she felt pretty sure she knew.

Thinking they had walked far enough they

turned, and as they passed Helen Gould's home they noticed Mildred and Harold Childs were leaving. As they reached the car, Mildred noticed Marguerite and Edwin strolling along and she thought, "If I had only been with them tonight?" Some way, to her the party was a failure. She tried to put her old enthusiasm into her dancing, but for some reason she could not enjoy it at all. The words of Marguerite seemed stamped on her memory, "Laying up treasure in Heaven," and she kept taking an invoice of her life to see if she had ever done anything that had lifted another to a higher plane of living; she thought how selfish she had been to be always thinking of her own pleasure. She tried to make excuses for herself and said, "I never did anything that would hurt anyone, and, anyway, mother wishes me to attend parties and be gay," but the more she excused, the more her conscience accused; and by the time they had reached home she was miserable. Harold had said, "Mildred, you are not well. You are not yourself tonight; don't you think we had better go home?" So they had slipped quietly away without letting anyone know they were going. Mildred felt she could not explain to Harold what was wrong, so when they reached the house she said, "I am sorry, Harold, I spoiled your evening's enjoyment, but I couldn't help it."

"No, indeed, Mildred! You could never spoil my enjoyment if I have the pleasure of your company. I am always happy when with you; but I fear you are not well and think you should call a physician."

"No, no; don't even mention it to father or mother, if they are still up, for it is nothing. I am going straight to my room, and after a night's rest I will be myself again." So saying goodbye, she hurried into the house and to her room. Her father and mother had already retired and she was glad she didn't have to explain why she came home so early, it being only eleven, and usually it was near one o'clock before she got home.

She hurriedly prepared for bed and all the time kept scolding herself for the way she had done. "Why is it I did not enjoy the dancing this evening?" I am sure the music was fine, and my partners were of the best. Oh! I wish Marguerite had not said what she did to me today. I am going to forget it and go to sleep. I mean some time to be a Christian, but not now. She lay down, but not to sleep. The more she thought, the more miserable she became. At last she thought, I believe I will read a few verses in my Bible for a change; and the words to which she turned, strange to say, were "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust

doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt nor thieves break through and steal." That was what she was trying to forget, and here it was staring at her again. She turned the leaves and glanced at different verses and the one that caught her eye was, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." She felt that was to her, and on her knees she said, "Oh, Lord, I come. Forgive me for my indifference and from henceforth my life shall be Thine." When she prayed this prayer she was so happy she could hardly believe it possible in a few short moments to change in such a way. Then she knelt by her bed and thanked God for showing her herself and helping her to decide for Him. She said, "From henceforth Marguerite shall have my company to all services of the church. No more worldly pleasures for me; there are so many things I can do that will bring happiness. What will mother say when I tell her?" She prayed for her father and mother and very soon she fell into the sweetest sleep she had known for days.

The next morning Mildred ran over to Marguerite's and called her to take a little walk. They chose their favorite path outside the city, down a clear stream, and as they walked Mildred said: "Marguerite, I have

something to tell you. Do you know since our conversation yesterday, when you said what you did to me about being a Christian and that by my service I could be laying up treasure in Heaven, I haven't been able to put that thought out of my mind, and while I did not want to go to the party and spend the evening dancing, I went anyway, determined I would not listen. Even after I got there the words kept ringing in my ears, "Laying up treasure in Heaven," and I looked back over my life and felt I had never done anything to help anybody, and if I should die I would be lost. Harold noticed I was not myself and asked me to go home early." Marguerite's arm stole around Mildred and the tears were glistening in her eyes as she only pressed her closer and listened to those words so dear. "As we came away I saw you and Edwin on the other side of the street, and I wished I had been with you. After I retired I couldn't sleep, and decided to get up and read a little in my Bible. To what should I turn but those words of yours about 'laying up treasure in Heaven.' I was trying to get away from that, and here it was again. I carelessly turned the leaves and saw this verse staring at me, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.' I felt I couldn't stand it any longer and on my knees confessed my sin and received the greatest blessing I ever knew; then I promised from

henceforth I will serve Jesus. I want to thank you for what you said and for your prayers, for I know that is why God called me to Him, and I shall always love you for it."

By this time Marguerite was shedding tears of joy and, as she drew Mildred closer to her, she said, "Mildred, I was praying for you last night, and all at once I felt my prayers were answered. It is certainly a happy time, for I have felt if I could lead you to Christ I would give anything in the world."

Mildred asked Marguerite not to speak of it until she had first told her father and mother. "I hesitate to tell them, especially mother, as she gets so much pleasure out of worldly things, and thinks I ought to; but from now on I will not attend questionable amusements. I think now I will wait until Sunday morning, when I will go to church and when the invitation is given, I shall present myself for membership." "Perhaps your father and mother will go to church with you." "I am going to try to get them to, and won't you pray that they too may accept Christ and that we may all be an unbroken family, serving our King?" When they reached home Marguerite said, "By the way, Mildred, the young man I spoke of that joined the church last night is to spend the evening with us. Can't you come over? He is working for father and came

here recently from Tennessee." "Thank you, Marguerite; I would love to, but I promised father last night I would spend the evening at home and sing for him tonight." Pressing each other's hand they parted, and each with a light heart entered her home.

CHAPTER IV.

That evening after dinner, when Mr. and Mrs. Tucker and Mildred were seated in the drawing room, they began to question Mildred as to whether she had a good time at the party. Mildred replied, "It was a very pretty party, but she did not enjoy the dancing as she usually did. It seems such a waste of time to spend evenings in that way," she said. Mrs. Tucker looked up and said, "What in the world is coming over you, Mildred; you used to be so fond of dancing?"

"Well, mother; I would rather spend the evening with you and father and sing some of the good old hymns than to always be at some party. I am going to stay at home more than I have heretofore. I shall cancel my engagement for tomorrow night and stay with you, unless you get tired of me tonight."

Mr. Tucker said, "Come, girlie; I am glad we are to get acquainted with you again, and that we are to have some old-time singing." With that Mildred went to the piano and, picking up the Hymnal, turned to "Jesus Lover of My Soul." Mr. and Mrs. Tucker joined in. They all had good voices and enjoyed singing together. They sang several others, among

them being, "I Need Thee Every Hour"; "Break Thou the Bread of Life, Dear Lord, to Me"; and closed with "Face to Face With Thee, My Saviour." They had scarcely finished singing when callers were announced, and the rest of the evening was spent with friends.

After the family prayers and Marguerite had put the little ones to bed as usual, she came down and found Mr. Douglass had already arrived and the family and he were chatting away like old friends. He told them of his home near Knoxville, and how his mother replied to the telegram he sent her announcing his conversion, with the words, "God be praised—letter will follow." He could hardly wait for the letter to come, for he knew how overjoyed his mother was, as she had been so anxious for him to take this step since a boy of thirteen years. He was a graduate of the University at Knoxville. After spending some time in conversation, Marguerite brought out some games and the evening was gone before they realized it. When leaving he thanked them for an enjoyable evening, and to Mr. Woodson's urgent invitation to feel free to join their family circle whenever it suited him, he replied he would certainly avail himself of the privilege.

Sunday morning came and it was an ideal day. One of those autumn days more like

spring than fall, and you can almost imagine you see Nature unfolding. After breakfast, when they were all ready for Sunday School, Marguerite said: "Mildred is going with me to church this morning. We may not be able to get there for Sunday School. However, if she is dressed in time we will." "Shall I come for you, Marguerite?" asked Edwin. "No, thank you. I think possibly Mr. Tucker will go; and if not he will take us over in his car." So saying, she ran over to Mildred's to find her up and waiting for her to come. Marguerite picked out a simple white voile. Mildred looked so sweet and girlish, with happiness shining in her eyes. They went downstairs and Mildred said, "Father, I am going to church with Marguerite this morning. I wish you would go with me."

"All right, Mildred. I shall be glad to go. Where is your mother, perhaps she will go too." Mildred went in search of her mother and found her dressed apparently for church; and as Mildred asked her to accompany them, she consented at once; they immediately started and though they were a little late, were in time for the lesson. Mr. Tucker was ushered into the Men's Bible Class, taught by Mr. Woodson, and was given a glad welcome and urged to join the class.

Mrs. Tucker had to admit that the Married

Woman's Bible Class was well worth attending, and as she joined her husband for the church service she thought she would make it convenient to come again soon and perhaps join the class. She said to Mr. Tucker, "I didn't know so many men and women attended the Bible School, and some of our very best citizens. I believe we should enjoy coming all the time."

Marguerite taught a class of young girls from thirteen to fifteen, and Mildred visited with her. She felt it was a privilege to help train the young in the things of the Kingdom, and hoped she might have a class after she was identified with the church.

That morning as the choir took their places and the magnificent pipe organ pealed out, "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow," Mildred thought, "I never knew how pretty it was before. Surely I feel like praising Him this morning." The minister announced his text, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall he give in exchange for his soul?"

How strange that he should have selected those words which had been ringing in Mr. Tucker's ears for several days. Mr. Tucker paid the strictest attention to every word the

minister said, and as he heard the earnest plea to those who were in danger of losing their souls, Mr. Tucker thought, "It is time I settle this question: and in his heart prayed God would help him to confess his need of a Saviour." When the sermon was ended and the choir was singing, "Jesus Paid It All," the minister asked if there were any present who wished to surrender their lives to Jesus and confess Him before men, would they come forward. At once, without waiting, Mildred arose and started forward. She was surprised when her father stepped out into the aisle, but she thought it was to let her pass, but instead, without noticing that she was coming, he went down the aisle. She was so happy. Stopping, she turned to her mother and said, "Won't you join us and go too?" After a moment's hesitation, with tears glistening in her eyes, Mrs. Tucker arose and went to the front. Every eye was dimmed by tears as they saw this family in whom they felt a special interest, and who would mean so much to the cause of Christ, publicly confess their need of a Saviour. As they were given an opportunity of confessing with the mouth the Lord Jesus, Mildred in clear ringing tones told how she had been so wonderfully saved on Wednesday night, in answer to Marguerite Woodson's words and prayers. She said she had since been praying that when

she should come to confess her Saviour on Sunday morning, God would lead her father and mother also to accept Him, and her heart was running over with the cup of His Salvation.

Mr. Tucker told of how on the same evening, as he had thought of his old home and his mother's teaching, he had felt he needed a Saviour and had decided then and there that on Sunday, instead of spending the morning in his car, he would go to church service; that when listening to the sermon, which was from the same text of scripture which his father had impressed on the minds of his boys, he had settled the question and made up his mind from that day he would live for Christ.

Mrs. Tucker said: "I had no idea when coming here this morning of publicly confessing my need of a Saviour. I have often felt as I read the lives of those who showed by their living that Jesus was so much to them, that I would like to be a Christian; but I have been very fond of the world and worldly pleasures, and I would put the desire aside and go on in my pleasure seeking. Today, when my husband and daughter were brave enough to take this stand, I realized I was lost and determined to give up everything that stood in my way, and live to win others to Him who has so marvelously saved me."

The minister, with trembling voice, thanked God for so richly blessing them all, and for hearing prayer for the salvation of this dear family. The congregation stood, and with voices that rang with praise, sang "More Love to Thee, O Christ." It was announced that the baptism would take place at the evening service. That evening as the Tucker family went down into the water and said by their baptism they died to sin and arose to a new life, it was a beautiful sight. Following them came Mr. Douglass, in his young manhood, showing to the world by this act the death and resurrection of our Lord, and his own death to sin and resurrection to a new life in Christ.

Little did they know that back in the congregation sat a man who was down in the depths of sin; who had done all he could to hinder the cause of Christ, that as he witnessed this ordinance he thought if he could only know that Christ would wash him, that he might be clean! The words came to him, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as wool; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as white as snow." He thought, Oh! if I could bury them all with Christ and arise to a new life; Jesus said, "My grace is sufficient for thee," but he, too, like so many others, said: Not now, but some day I will be a Christian.

CHAPTER V.

The next morning as Mr. and Mrs. Tucker and Mildred were together in the living room, they began to discuss how they could be a help to someone; and to use some of the money God had given them, for His glory.

Mr. Tucker said, "From now on I shall keep an account and give at least one-fifth of all my income to the Lord. I do not want to feel I have only paid my debt by giving one-tenth, but want to make a love gift to Him for His goodness to us."

Mildred said, "Father, I know one place you can invest it where it will bring good results." "Where, daughter, do you think it will be money well spent?"

"Marguerite Woodson has always wanted to be a missionary. I am sure she feels her father is not able to give her the needed training for this work, although she has never said this to me. She also feels she is needed at home to help care for the children, as you know they only keep one maid and her mother has poor health; Marguerite feels she cannot go now, although her heart is yearning to be able to prepare herself for this work. The question is, how to provide the means without them feeling under obligations to us; for you know Mr. Woodson would not want to feel you were giving it to him."

Her father said, "You are right, Mildred. I do not know any place I could put this money where it would bring greater returns for the Lord than to prepare Marguerite for her life work; and it would be the greatest pleasure for me to do it. Don't you think you can in some way arrange it so they will accept it without thinking of it as a favor?"

Mildred said, "I think I can. I am going to talk to Marguerite and ask her to allow me the privilege of having a part in her work by furnishing the means whereby she can hire a maid to care for the children, and pay her expenses at the Training School, so she can enter at once on her preparation. Don't you believe she will, since she led me to Christ, and she knows I love her for it and want to have a part in the work of Christ?"

Mr. Tucker said, "I think she will. Surely she will accept it, and not allow any false pride to hinder the work of the Master."

That morning as Mr. Tucker entered the bank, he began to think of those in his employ, and wondered if they received a sufficient salary to keep their families in comfort. The first thing he did was to call the cashier and get a list of what each man was receiving for his work. As he went over the list, he was surprised that he had never given this any thought before. Surely, when these men

were working early and late and under the higher cost of living, they deserved an increase in salary. He immediately saw to it that each man had a sufficient increase to allow him to live at least comfortably. He then thought he would invite the force to his home for an evening, and get personally acquainted with them. Perhaps he might be able to help them in more ways than one.

There was great rejoicing in the Bank when they received their next pay to find they had received a 25 per cent increase. Each man went to the cashier, not knowing it was general, and thinking there was some mistake. He explained to them, through the kindness of the president this was done, and they of course had a great deal of respect for a man who, without being requested by anyone, had given them more than they could have hoped for.

There was certainly rejoicing in the Woodson home that Sunday evening. Marguerite was never happier in her life than then, for she loved Mildred dearly. She had been praying with her for Mr. and Mrs. Tucker, and to think God had answered so soon! Mr. Douglass had accompanied her home and they had so much to talk of, as he, too, was so happy in the new found life to which God had called him. He told her of his mother's letter, and how she had said that on that Wednesday

evening she had been so burdened for his salvation and how she had prayed. It seemed her heart would break if he did not accept Christ as his personal Saviour; then when the telegram came, it seemed it was right from Heaven itself. He told her a little more of his family life, and Marguerite realized why Mrs. Douglass was so anxious for him to accept Christ. His father died when he was a child without publicly confessing Christ. Of course, they hoped that while he was unconscious, God spake peace to his soul; but they had no assurance that he was saved. His mother had married his father when it was against her family's wishes, because he was not a Christian, and rather wild. While he had always been good to her, still there was not that oneness that comes by both being born again. Consequently, they had no family altar, and he had never had the pleasure of hearing his father lead in prayer. His mother used to take him to her room when he was a little boy and read to him out of the Scripture, and ask God to call him into service for Himself. He said, "I think I will also have some more good news for mother, for I feel that prayer is to be answered, too. I am more and more convinced that God wants to send me to the uttermost parts of the earth to preach the Gospel; as soon as I can see my way clear to go to the Theological Seminary, I

want to enter and prepare myself for this work."

Marguerite wished him Godspeed, and wanted to tell him that she, too, hoped to go as a missionary some day; but she refrained, as she had not yet spoken to her parents of her plans.

As Edward was to leave on Tuesday for Cambridge for his last year in college, the young people were to have a picnic on Monday evening, going in automobiles fifteen miles from Richwood, taking their suppers and returning by moonlight. Marguerite asked Mr. Douglass if he would join them, to which he gladly agreed if he could be away from the store. Mr. Woodson said, "Sure; go on and have a good time." It was arranged he was to call for Marguerite, and, looking at his watch, he arose to go. Marguerite walked to the door with him and said, "I was so glad to hear what you told me tonight; that you intend going as a missionary to the foreign field. Some day I will tell you something, but not just yet." He said, "I shall be mighty glad to hear it, and will look forward to the time when you will tell me. What time shall we start on the picnic?"

"About two o'clock." "All right; I will be on time. Goodbye."

CHAPTER VI.

The next afternoon was bright and clear. At two o'clock the young folks, with Mrs. Tucker as chaperon, started on their journey. There were eight couples, and Edwin went with Mildred. He looked very happy and contented; he felt this would be his opportunity to speak to Mildred of his love. The three cars were soon filled, and Edwin took the lead. In this car were Mrs. Tucker, Evelyn Barr, Curtis Powell, Marguerite and Mr. Douglass, Mildred and Edwin. They were soon outside the city on the good roads, enjoying the scenery and fresh air. The other cars were not far behind them and they were a jolly crowd. It was an ideal day; the girls had prepared a tempting lunch, and, too, they were going to fry some bacon and eggs, just for the fun of it. They had an extra car to bring the baskets, and the boys had slipped in a freezer of orange ice, of which the girls were unaware.

After driving about an hour they came to the spot where they were to spend the afternoon. They unloaded the car with the baskets and, like most young folks full of life, they saw all the things of interest; played

games, fished, and had a good time generally. Mrs. Tucker had brought her fancy work; as the young folks played or strolled around, she was busy studying their tastes and suggesting things that might interest them. After they had finished their game, Edwin said to Mildred, "Let's take a little walk and explore that path along the water." They started and soon were some little distance away from the crowd, when Edwin said, "Marguerite tells me you are going abroad." Mildred said, "Yes; that was our plan, but since Sunday I haven't heard mother mention it, and it may be that our plans will be changed. To be frank, I am not sure I care to go and leave father for so long."

"How long had you expected to be away?"

"We thought to be gone a year at least; possibly we would stay two. Father expected to come to us in a year, and we would decide then whether we would prolong our stay."

"I hope you will change your mind, for a year seems such a long time. Still, I know it would be very interesting to travel and see so many things of interest."

"Do you know, Mildred, when Marguerite told me that, I felt I must see you and reveal to you what I had promised myself I would

not tell you until I had finished college; but it is a year yet, and I could not wait any longer and run the risk of seeing someone win you. No doubt you will be surprised, Mildred, to know that for a year I have loved you as a man can love a woman only once in his life. I have thought of you the first thing in the morning and the last thing at night. In fact, have been with you many times in my dreams. I know I am young, and am not in a position to offer you my hand in marriage for a few years; but if you will only give me the assurance that you love me, and will wait until I can give you a home worthy of such a girl as you are, I shall be the happiest man living." He waited, and, as Mildred looked down at the ground, she said: "Edwin, I never dreamed you cared for me, only as a friend; I feel honored that such a splendid young man as you are should feel towards me as you do; but, really, I do not think I love you in the way you speak of."

"Mildred, don't you think you **can** love me? Is there anyone else that occupies first place in your heart?"

"No, Edwin; I am heart-free. I have never given marriage much thought, although I knew some day I would meet and love someone. I do not say I will never love you; and am free to say, if I find that I do care for you

in that way, Edwin, I shall let you know at once. It is true we are both young to decide these matters; so let us be the best of friends until you have finished college, and by that time perhaps you will see someone else you care more for, and I shall have that time to know my own heart; then I will give you my answer."

Edwin had to be content with this, but it seemed a long time to wait. He would soon be twenty, and Mildred was nineteen. They promised to write often. Mildred had to confess to herself she was glad Edwin loved her; but she was not sure she cared enough for him to give him her promise. They decided to go back to the crowd, as it was time for lunch. As they started back, Edwin threw his arm around Mildred and drew her to him, saying, "I must seal my love with a kiss." Without waiting for her consent, he pressed his lips to hers with all the love of his soul in that kiss. Mildred thought, after all, it is not much use to wait, for I am sure **now** I love Edwin. But she didn't tell him so, which afterward she so much regretted.

When they reached the rest of the crowd, they said, "Where have you been? We have been looking for you, and see, you might have missed your lunch, had you stayed longer." The lunch was all prepared, even the bacon

and eggs fried, and how tempting everything looked. They all were hungry and soon found places around the table, which happened to be the ground; but with the snow-white cloth and with plates which didn't have to be washed, and in this lovely setting, it tasted better than if served in the finest home. As they were all seated, Mrs. Tucker said, "Shall we return thanks to Him who has provided so liberally for our wants?" and called on Edwin to ask the blessing, which he did in clear tones and in an impressive manner. They all ate until they could eat no more. The orange ice was especially enjoyed, as it was a surprise. They picked up the things that were left and thought, possibly we will see someone on our way home to whom we can give them. When they saw it was three o'clock they decided to start home and drive around another way, which would probably take an hour and a half. As they were all seated and each one declaring they had the finest time of their lives, wishing Edwin success in his studies and all his undertakings, they started off. This time Edwin and his party were last instead of first and took their time to enjoy everything as they went along. They had gone possibly ten miles, when they came to a sharp curve and, not being familiar with the road, they went too close to the embankment, and the car turned over. Every-

one screamed at once, but most of them jumped and saved themselves. Edwin, who was on the lower side, was the only one injured, the car falling on him. Of course, they were all terribly frightened; the boys grabbed the car and, lifting it off of Edwin, found him unconscious. Marguerite and Mildred, with tears running down their cheeks, were bathing his face and rubbing his hands, but he hadn't yet regained consciousness. Mr. Douglass said, "We will put him in the car and run to the nearest town with him to find a doctor;" so saying, he was lifted into the back seat and Marguerite and Mildred sat with him, while Mr. Douglass drove as fast as was safe to the little town three miles away. By that time Edwin opened his eyes and said, "What is the matter? Where are we?" The doctor, after examining him, said he had a fractured rib and was badly bruised otherwise. He hoped there were no internal injuries. It was such a relief when they reached home and Edwin was carried in with as little excitement as possible, in order not to alarm his mother. Mr. and Mrs. Woodson, as usual, were in the living room, and Mrs. Woodson had her mending in her lap, when they heard them coming. They went to the door to meet them and found them carrying Edwin in. "Oh, my! What has happened? My boy, my boy; are you hurt?"

"No, not much, mother. I will be all right in a little while." She saw he was trying to put on a brave face. White as a sheet, she was about to fall, when Mr. Woodson caught her. They carried her into the living room and laid her on the couch, and succeeded in getting Edwin upstairs and in bed. Then Mr. Woodson said, "Tell me what has happened, and how badly Edwin is hurt." They told him of the accident and what the doctor had said. He was not satisfied, and sent for his physician, who came at once. Seeing Mrs. Woodson in a serious condition, he stopped to give her some heart stimulant, at the request of Marguerite, who sat beside her. Going upstairs two steps at a time, he looked very grave as he saw how ashen Edwin was, and examined him thoroughly. He found he had struck his head in falling, and there was quite a lump on the back of his head, which, he feared, might cause concussion of the brain. Every little while Edwin would sink into unconsciousness, and his condition became more alarming as time went on.

Dr. Moore never left him all night. He kept ice bags on his head and bathed his feet in very warm water to draw the blood from his head. By morning he seemed a little better, but the danger was not passed. No one was allowed in his room but Marguerite, who nursed him according to the doctor's instruc-

tions. Mrs. Woodson was herself again and busied herself preparing bandages and everything needed for Edwin. Dr. Moore had differed with the other doctor in his diagnosis; as he said there were no bones broken, but he was terribly bruised.

CHAPTER VII.

Mildred had gone home with a heavy heart when the doctor had expressed his fears of concussion of the brain. She had realized in those few hours what Edwin was to her and she thought, if I had only told him last night when he kissed me. Oh! if he should not get well, I would always regret that I did not tell him. He looked so sad and unhappy when I said he must wait. She prayed with all her soul that God would spare him to her and that, without waiting, she might tell him that she knew now that she loved him with all her heart.

The next morning before breakfast she slipped over and going on upstairs without ringing the bell, she tapped lightly on Edwin's door. Marguerite opened the door, and seeing Mildred look so worried and unhappy, she told her to come in and sit beside Edwin for a little while to see if he would know her. How her heart bled as she saw him looking so pale and weak. She knelt by his bed and laying her face against his, she poured out her love for him in the presence of Marguerite; but poor Edwin did not know that the girl he would give his life for was kneeling beside him and trying so hard to make him know his love was returned. Every little while in his unconsciousness Edwin would be telling Mildred of his love and asking her to please promise him she would be his wife. It

broke her heart to think she might have saved him all this sorrow had she told him when she realized it last night. All morning she sat beside him while Marguerite had a little rest, and how she patted his cheek and spoke endearing words to him. She didn't want to be away from him a moment, for fear he would return to consciousness, and she wanted him to know of her love, which would relieve his mind and make him happy.

When the doctor came back about ten o'clock and saw Mildred sitting beside Edwin he was glad, for during the night he had learned Edwin's secret; he had raved in delirium of his love for Mildred, and Dr. Moore saw by her expression that his love was not in vain. He told her he was glad she was there, for if Edwin should regain consciousness it might save his life to see her beside him. Mildred said, "You do not think he will die, do you, Doctor?" "My dear little girl, I hope not. We can hardly tell; but if he lives through the day, I will have hopes of him."

How earnestly Mildred prayed that he might get well, and how Mr. and Mrs. Woodson and Marguerite poured out their hearts to God to spare him to them. Mrs. Tucker had come over and was keeping Mrs. Woodson cheered up and not allowing her to go beyond her strength in her efforts to do some-

thing for Edwin. At two o'clock that morning, as Marguerite and Mildred sat by his bed, Edwin opened his eyes and said, "What has happened?"

Mildred leaned over and kissed him and asked if he knew her. His face lit up as he recognized Mildred, and he said, "Are you here, Mildred? I am so glad you came." She whispered in his ear, "Edwin, I love you with all my heart." How perfectly happy he looked as he tried to draw her to him. She said, "You must lie perfectly still now; but I will not leave you, and you will soon be well. I knew last night when you kissed me that I loved you, and I have been so sorry that I didn't tell you then; but I never would have known how much I love you if you hadn't been hurt."

He said, "Thank God for that accident then, for if I don't get well, I shall die happy." Mildred said, "You **must** get well, for **my** sake. Go to sleep now, and remember, I am right here beside you."

He closed his hand over hers and fell into a sweet sleep. When he awoke about eight o'clock next morning he was decidedly better, and the doctor said it would only be a short time now until he would be himself again.

How happy Mildred and Edwin were as she sat beside him and he knew that some day she would be his wife. She had hard work keeping him from talking too much and thus overtaxing his strength. He was very weak and must be extremely careful for a few days. Mildred told him she must go over home for a little while, but she would soon be back. She kissed him and told him to rest while she was gone so he could talk to her when she got back. He followed her with his eyes as she left the room, and oh! how full of joy they were as he thought he need not wait for a year for her answer.

Mildred went direct to her mother's room, and said, "I have something to tell you." She then told her how Edwin had declared his love for her on the previous day, and the answer she had made him. How she had felt when he was hurt and she realized she loved him, and regretted so much she had not told him when she realized it. She told how he had called for her in his delirium and how happy they were since he knew that she loved him. There was a time when Mrs. Tucker would have been very much vexed at Mildred for loving a poor man, but not so now. She felt probably they would be much happier than if they were rich and not Christians, so she put her arms around her daughter and said, "I am so glad for you, dear, since you love

Edwin so much. He is a fine young man, and I am sure will make us all proud of him some day. Of course you are both so young and he hasn't finished college, so I do not think it wise to announce your engagement at present. Do you?" "Not just now, mother. Probably we will have to wait for a year, but that seems a long time. We will talk of that later."

Mildred went to her room to rest, and as she had been up all night she soon fell asleep and did not waken until nearly dinner time. As the maid was arranging her hair that evening she paid the strictest attention. She had been thinking as she was lying on the bed, why should I be waited on in this manner? Why not spare Janet to the Woodsons, for she knew how fond she was of children, and she felt Marguerite might consent to her plan if she could have as capable a maid as Janet. She had not spoken of this to her father and mother, which she wished to do before mentioning it to Marguerite. As soon as dinner was over she said, "Father, I want to speak to you and mother about an idea I have had today." She explained to them that she did not think she needed anyone to wait on her, and asked if it would be all right when making the proposition to Marguerite, if she should offer to loan her Janet. Her mother said, "Why, Mildred; you have been accus-

tomed to being waited on all your life. I believe you do not realize what it would mean to do anything for yourself." Mildred replied that she thought she would be happier to do this, to do for herself, and with their consent, she would like to try it. Her father said, "All right, Mildred; if you feel this way about it. I think myself Marguerite might be more likely to accept your offer, as she knows Janet, how thoughtful and capable she is, and would feel the children were in good hands."

"Janet would be so good to Mrs. Woodson, too," said Mildred. "I think when I explain to Janet why I would like her to go, she will consent, for she is very conscientious and will be glad to be of any help to anybody." And so it was arranged that Mildred should speak to Marguerite at her earliest opportunity, so if the arrangement could be made, she could enter the Training School the last of October.

Mildred said, "I am going over now to see how Edwin is, and, if possible, I will see Marguerite while I am there. Mother, you may tell father my secret while I am gone."

So saying, she hurried over to the Woodsons and found Edwin looking like another person. He, like his sister, had beautiful brown eyes and hair; his color had returned to his cheeks and with a happy smile he drew

Mildred to him and said, "You are the best doctor I know. Just look at me, and it is because of what I have to look forward to that I am improving so rapidly." Mildred was all smiles, and as she sat down beside him, said, "When does the doctor say you may get up?" "I am going to sit up tomorrow morning, and I expect to go to Cambridge Saturday, in order to enter school Monday. I do not want to miss any more than is necessary."

They feel that they have so much to talk about before that time, so we will leave them alone while they discuss their future.

CHAPTER VIII.

The children had gone to school, and when Mildred came the next morning, slipping her hand in Marguerite's, asked her, since Mrs. Woodson was with Edwin, if they could go for a little stroll, as she had many things to tell her. She felt Marguerite needed the fresh air, and, too, she could talk to her better of the things in her heart down by the brook.

It was a delightful morning and all nature seemed in tune with the throbbings of her heart, and how the birds were singing. Everyone she met seemed to look happier, Mildred thought. Perhaps it was the reflection of her own happiness in the faces of others. She said, "Marguerite, I have something to tell you which makes me so happy, and I hope it will make you just as happy. You are as near to me as a sister could possibly be, and now, since some day I am to be your sister indeed, it seems too good to be true. I have wished so many times you were my really, truly sister!" Marguerite said, "Nothing could be sweeter to me than to know this, Mildred. We all love you dearly, and will so gladly welcome you into our family."

"Marguerite, after what you have done for me by your prayers and lovely example, I

just feel I want to do something that will help in the work of the Lord, and know of no better way than to make it possible for you to go on with the preparation for your life work. I know the desire of your life is to do this—and yet you are so self-sacrificing, you always think of others first—and by this, as in a million ways, you have taught me a lesson. I thought when Janet was waiting on me last evening, why should I be waited on like a baby? I am able to do these things for myself, and now I know what I am going to do; Janet is such a good, conscientious girl, and loves children dearly, so I am going to loan her to Mrs. Woodson to help care for her and the children; then Marguerite can go to the Training School this fall. Now, Marguerite (as she started to speak), you must not interrupt me until I am through. You know for years we have had all that heart could wish, and I want to say to you it hasn't given me half the happiness that I have had since thinking of others, and father and mother feel the same, I know. Father said, the other evening, he was going to give one-fifth of his income to the cause of the Lord; I told him what your desire had been, and I felt the **best investment** I knew would be to provide you with the means that it would take and a maid to help at home. Now, my dear girl, if you say **one word** against this, it will hurt me more

than I can tell you, for I feel God has shown me I can in this way do something for Him. I feel sure your father and mother will be very happy when they find you have given your life in service to our King, as they are such consecrated Christians. So now, please do not hesitate to allow us this pleasure. My father said it would be the greatest pleasure in the world to him, and if you refuse it you might dampen his enthusiasm in the work of the Lord."

Marguerite said, "Mildred, I cannot thank you in words for your generous offer. I have been praying if God would have me go at once, that He would provide the way; I feel He has put this into your heart so how could I refuse? This has given me more happiness than anything you could do for me, and I am sure now God is leading me; I can go knowing He has a place for me to fill. And, too, your father, with his wealth, will be able to do so much for the advancement of the cause of Christ." And out there, in that sacred spot, with no one to disturb them, Marguerite and Mildred sat while Marguerite poured out her heart in thankfulness to God for another answer to prayer; she prayed for His richest blessings to be upon Mildred, her father and mother, for their devotion to the cause of the Master and their thoughtfulness in providing a way for her to enter upon the

work of the Kingdom.

"How wonderfully the Heavenly Father does hear the prayers of His children, and when it is for the advancement of His Kingdom, He gives us the answer," said Mildred.

"When do you go away, Mildred?" Marguerite asked as they started for home. Mildred said she hoped their plans would be changed, as she didn't want to leave her father for so long. "I am going to talk with father and mother about it probably tonight."

When Marguerite reached home she went directly to Edwin's room and found Mrs. Woodson and Edwin talking earnestly. He had told his mother about his engagement to Mildred, and how he wanted to make the most of his time in school this year. He was saying he hoped he could get something to do on Saturdays and help along with the expense. Mrs. Woodson was happy to know Mildred reciprocated his love; but she said, "Edwin, dear, Mildred has everything that heart could wish and it will be years before you can offer her a home; probably never one so good as the one in which she has been reared. Are you sure she loves you enough to be willing to sacrifice for your sake?"

"Yes, mother; I have spoken of this and of how long it would take to provide such a home

as she deserves; but she would not allow me to mention about riches. She says since she is a Christian, she has more real happiness than with all her wealth; that a **real** home is not made up of fine houses and furniture with servants to attend to everything; but where husband and wife are one in Christ—and their ambitions and desires the same. Where tastes differ, there cannot be perfect harmony. That is, where one knows Jesus Christ, and his interest is in things of the Kingdom; and the other doesn't care for the Church and its work."

"I am sure she is right, and if she enters upon married life with these views, I have no fears as to your happiness."

The children came in from school full of life and enthusiasm and went up to tell Edwin everything that had happened during the day. Mr. Woodson came a little later and was so pleased to see the marked improvement in Edwin, and that he would be able to go down to dinner with them. Dr. Moore had found when he examined Edwin that he had no broken bones, his rib was just bruised and now he was gaining strength rapidly. With the aid of his father he was able to go downstairs, and was determined to do so; he wanted surely to be able to leave Saturday for Cambridge. His father was afraid he was

rushing too much and said, "Son, I believe you should wait until Monday; this is Friday, and I fear you are hardly ready for the trip tomorrow. However, we will see what Dr. Moore says about it."

That evening Marguerite decided to tell her father and mother her desire, and how God had opened the way. She told them how God had seemed to call her more than a year ago, and how she felt she could not be spared from home while her mother was not well; she had prayed if it were God's will for her to go now, He would provide the way; how Mildred had come to her begging that she allow her to do this for her because she wanted to help in the work of the Lord, and of Mr. Tucker's intention of giving for the advancement of the Kingdom. Mr. and Mrs. Woodson were so happy. Mr. Woodson said, "I feel honored that God has called one of our children in special service to Himself; of course, we cannot say no, under the circumstances. It is too plainly the leading of the Holy Spirit."

Mrs. Woodson, with tears in her eyes, said, "I, too, am thankful for the way God is leading, and while we shall miss Marguerite more than we can express, we must not think of our happiness first. We gladly give our consent for you to enter upon the greatest work in the world—winning souls for the Master."

It was decided that Marguerite should leave the following week for Louisville, to enter the Training School; so she went upstairs to look over her clothes and get them in readiness.

Edwin's trunk was already packed, but the doctor thought he should wait until the 1 a. m. train Monday morning; they were glad they were to have one more Sunday together. This would not make him very late, as he would reach college Monday afternoon, in time to be enrolled. Edwin had been up for some time, so his father helped him upstairs and said, "in another day you will be as good as new."

Marguerite always kept her clothes in order, so she didn't have much trouble in getting them together and pressed, ready to pack in her trunk. She thought she had everything she needed, but Mrs. Woodson said, "You must have a new suit, Marguerite. The one you have will be all right for everyday wear, but you need a good one for best." So it was decided they would go down street in the morning and select a suit, with hat, gloves and shoes to match.

When Mr. and Mrs. Woodson were in their room, they were speaking of how they should miss Marguerite and Edwin. Mr. Woodson

said, "It seems to me no parents ever had children that gave them so little trouble." Mrs. Woodson replied, "A great deal of the credit is due you, for you remember when they were small you were very firm with them, and led them in the right. It is true they are exceptionnally good children, but there was a time when, if they had been allowed to have their own way, I fear we should not have been as proud of them as we are today. Sometimes I fear Richard and Robert are going to be harder to control; you must not allow them to get ahead of you, for it is for their good if you must at times seem to be cross with them." "You are right, mother; I have been worried about that myself, as they have lately began to assert their rights; we must be firm and give them the right start in life. Of course, it is easier to overlook their faults than to punish them for them, but it would not be fair to them. When I see how some children of today speak to their parents, my blood boils within me—but I feel the fault lies with the father and mother because they did not correct them while they were small."

Going into the children's room where they were sleeping so sweetly, it didn't seem possible they could ever be naughty, and both father and mother kissed them softly before retiring for the night.

CHAPTER IX.

Mildred decided when she reached home that she would go down to the bank and come home with her father. She used to do that quite often, but of late she had been so busy with other things she had neglected to go. Her father was always glad to see her; she felt she would like to have a little talk with him all alone. So after lunch, when she had rested for a little while, she arranged her hair for the first time and she never looked prettier. She hadn't yet spoken to Janet of her plan; she wanted to see how she would get along, and this was a good time to try. She laid out her blue silk voile, just the shade of her eyes, and a favorite dress of her fathers. With white shoes and hat she was beautiful to look at; going down stairs, she met Janet coming up. She was very much surprised to see Miss Mildred dressed and going out, and inquired if she rang for her. Mildred replied, "No, I wanted to see if I could arrange myself. How do I look?" "You couldn't be improved upon," Janet said. Mildred was pleased that she had no trouble the first time she attempted it. Going down to the bank, she inquired of the cashier if her father was en-

gaged. He went to find out and came back to usher her into his office. Her father didn't turn around until he heard the door close, and looked up to see his daughter standing near him.

"Why, Mildred; this is a treat. You haven't been down to see me lately. How pretty you look today!" as she stooped to kiss him. "Do I look as well as usual?" she asked. "You never looked prettier." "And I did it all myself, father, so you see I am not helpless, after all." She sat down and all at once Mr. Tucker remembered what Mrs. Tucker had told him about her engagement; he tried to be calm as he said, "Your mother told me of your engagement, Mildred; I am glad you are so happy. It is pretty hard for me to realize you are anything but a child, but I guess it is true you are as old as your mother was when we were married. Anyway, it will be several years yet before you will marry, will it not?"

"Yes, father; it will be some time. Edwin hasn't finished college and he was telling me last night he had hoped to be a physician—which, if he does, will mean four years more of study. He hasn't fully made up his mind and may decide to go in business with his father at the end of this year."

"What I came down to talk to you about is this: I would rather not go abroad, unless

you can go with us—if you can go it will be a wonderful trip; and perhaps as we view the ruins of France and Belgium, we may find where we may render a very great help to those people, and thus unto our Lord.”

Mr. Tucker said, “I hardly think it wise for me to leave at this time, but will think it over and we can decide later. Why have you changed your mind about going with your mother to spend a year abroad?”

“I do not care to be away from you for so long; there are so many places of interest in our own country which I have not seen, and in which you could probably join us; and I prefer these to going without you. The time would be very long to you with us away for a year, I am sure.”

“It certainly would; but do not let that stand in your way if you care to go. I believe your mother feels as you do about it, for she said last night if it would not be too great a disappointment to you, she thought she would rather not go.”

“I haven’t spoken to mother, for I feared she would be the one to be disappointed; so now I am sure our plans will be changed.”

“By the way, father, why couldn’t we start a home for those poor orphan children in Armenia. After that was established and in

running order, we would feel we had a real, live interest over there; and our trip would mean so much more to us. I would like to use the money you intended to spend on music for me, for that purpose."

Her father leaned back in his chair and thought for some little time before making a reply. He then said, "I will think about it. I do not know whether I could undertake a thing like that or not."

Mildred did not say any more; she felt if it were best, her father would decide in the right way, so she left it to him.

As they left the bank Mr. Tucker took time to introduce his daughter to all of the clerks, a thing which he had never done before. They had often seen her and admired her, but hadn't known her. He had planned to have them to his home the following Tuesday evening, and knew they would feel more like coming if they knew how sweet and gracious Mildred was to everyone.

When Mildred and her father reached home, being Saturday, it was earlier than usual, they found Mrs. Tucker away. She came in a little later, and when asked where she had been, said, "I have been down on Vine Street to see a family that the cook told me was in destitute

circumstances. I never saw such poverty, and I wonder how I could have lived here all these years without even thinking of those around me that needed help. The mother is sick, and there are five little children, the eldest being only twelve years old. She had all the work to do and to look after her mother, so of course she couldn't keep things clean. They had so little in their home to make them comfortable that it made me feel what a sinner I have been to enjoy everything that heart could wish without giving a thought to the poor around me. I want you to go down there with me this evening; let's make them happy by fixing up the children, making the mother comfortable and giving them enough to eat. The father is a hard-working man and it is easy to see that they have not always lived as they do now. Mrs. Thompson is a well-bred little woman and her children are well behaved. I got a nurse to take care of her and told them I would be back this evening to see how they were getting along. I went to the store and bought an outfit for each of the children, and bedclothes, gowns, etc., to make Mrs. Thompson comfortable. I think we will have to get a new bed, for that looked anything but inviting."

When dinner was over Mrs. Tucker fixed up some tempting things to carry to the sick mother, and with her clothing purchased for

the children, Mr. and Mrs. Tucker went down to see what could be done further for the Thompsons. Mildred expected Edwin over, so she did not go, but told her mother the next time she went, she wished to accompany her.

When Mr. and Mrs. Tucker reached the Thompsons they found the woman Mrs. Thompson had put in charge had made things very much more presentable. The room was put in order; the clean linens on the bed; Mrs. Thompson, after a hot bath, her hair combed becomingly and with a fresh gown, she looked better already. Mabel, the eldest child, had washed and dressed the children, and while their clothes were much the worse for wear, they were clean. And between them, the nurse and Mabel, a very plain though wholesome supper had been prepared. Altogether it looked as if it might not be long before the mother would be better, since she had proper attention. She was so happy, and told Mrs. Tucker she felt God had heard her prayer, and sent her as an angel of mercy to their assistance. She couldn't keep the tears of joy from coming to her eyes as Mrs. Tucker presented the children with the new clothing, and she said, "Now they can go to Sunday School." Mrs. Tucker told her they would be glad to call for them the next morning and take them in the car. Mrs. Thompson thanked her and said if it were not too much trouble,

she would be glad to have her. Mr. Tucker was taking an invoice of what they had, without seeming to do so; and what they would need, to have a comfortable home, and thus encourage Mr. Thompson, as he was struggling to "keep the wolf from the door"; and he felt it would help to make Mrs. Thompson well and strong. Miss Adams, the nurse, said she would be glad to have the children ready for Sunday School, and Mrs. Tucker promised to call for them about 9:45. Mr. Thompson followed them to the door and said: "I want to express my thanks to you for your kindness and help. God only knows how hard it has been for me to see my wife going down all the time, and not being able to make her any more comfortable; for I dared not stop work and wasn't able to hire anyone to take care of her. Mabel was doing as well as could be expected for a child, and it was really too much for her to do. May God's richest blessings rest upon you for the happiness and cheer you have brought into our home."

They told him it had been a pleasure, and they would be back soon and see how they were getting along; so saying, they departed for home.

CHAPTER X.

Mrs. Tucker had left word that breakfast should be served at eight o'clock on Sunday morning. They had been in the habit of sleeping late, until last Sunday; it was a settled fact now that they would join the Bible School, which would necessitate their getting up at an early hour. That morning as Janet was arranging Mildred's hair, Mildred said, "Janet, I want to ask a favor of you; will you grant it?" "Of course, Miss Mildred, if it is possible to do so."

Then Mildred told her of Marguerite's longing to be a missionary, and why she had not gone to the Training School. She told her she felt she was able to wait on herself, and she wanted to loan her to the Woodsons, as she knew she loved children and would take so much pains with the little ones; and, too, she would be such a comfort to Mrs. Woodson. She said, "Will you go?"

"Since it is your wish, I will gladly go. It has been a real pleasure to serve you, Miss Mildred, but if I can help others that need me more, especially as it is your wish, I certainly will do my best." Mildred told her Marguerite would be leaving in a few days;

she would let her know when she should move over.

It had turned considerably cooler, so Mildred told Janet she would wear her new fall suit. She looked so pretty in the handsome suit of navy blue and her hat was so becoming. It was hard to tell when she looked her best, in tailored suits or summer dresses; but she had such good taste and knew always just what suited the occasion. This was the first time she had gone any place with Edwin since their engagement, and she took pains to appear at her best. Marguerite, too, looked handsome in her new suit, as they drove off with the rest of the Woodson family, everybody was feeling happy. The Tuckers told them they would see them later, as they had promised to call for some children to take to Sunday School. So saying, they started for the Thompson home; found the children all ready, and they were certainly a happy little bunch as they came out in their new finery. They were nice looking children; anyone might have been proud to have owned them for they were so well behaved. They used to go to Sunday School at their old home, but since moving to Richwood had not been able to do so on account of their mother's illness.

Mildred was asked to take a class. Marguerite said, "Oh! Mildred, I want you to

take my class of girls, won't you?" "I do not know much about teaching, but shall be glad to learn; and I will gladly take your class of lovely girls after today, if you will give me your lesson helps, so I may prepare my lesson."

That morning the minister chose for his text, "Look upon the fields for they are white already to harvest." He made a strong appeal for the young to present themselves "a living sacrifice" and for a goodly offering for Missions. It hadn't been announced that Marguerite had offered herself for missionary work. That morning as the pastor gave the invitation, he said: "Are there those here this morning who have heard the call of God to go forth in His vineyard and win souls for the Master? Are there those here this morning who will answer this call, and be willing to go wherever the Lord shall lead? If so, will you come forward while we sing, 'I Gave My Life for Thee; What Hast Thou Done for Me?' "

Marguerite didn't know this opportunity would be given for her to publicly consecrate her life to the service of the Master; but she was glad when this invitation was given, for she was extremely happy and wanted to let others know. So she arose from her place in the choir and came forward. Her pastor's

heart leaped for joy as he saw one of his brightest flowers laying her life at the feet of Him whom he loved and served. She was not the only one; for Charles Douglass, who had been sitting with bowed head since the invitation was given at the close of the second verse, also came forward; while he didn't know just how he was to receive his training, he could not refuse the call of the Holy Spirit, which seemed to say, "Have faith in God and He will bring it to pass." When the last verse was being sung every eye was turned; for one of the girls in Marguerite's class, Dorothy Moore, came forward. She was only sixteen and would not graduate in high school until the following June; but she had been touched by Marguerite's life, and for some time had been thinking of spending her life in special work for the Master; so already Marguerite began to see the fruit of her labor. She was very fond of Dorothy and the tears ran down her cheeks. She was too happy for words, as she thought how brave Dorothy was; her father and mother had not been active in church work, and she feared would not approve the step their daughter had taken. Then the pledges were taken for the mission cause. Mr. Tucker welcomed this opportunity, for he had been wanting to give to this cause. When he pledged \$5,000, and stated he would like part of it used for the

training of Charles Douglass, Charles knew that God had opened the way; and he would not have to wait any longer. Other contributions amounted to \$5,000, so the church felt they had a part in the service, by giving three of its members and \$10,000 in money.

They were a happy congregation as they sang, "How Sweet is the Love of My Saviour"; after the benediction they came forward to congratulate those who were to have a part in winning the world for Jesus. Marguerite was asked by her class to recite the little poem which she had composed and which she had given for them on several occasions. Others joined in and insisted; so with her heart in every word, she repeated the following:

My Reverie.

Last night, as I lay on my bed
Thinking of all the dear Lord said
To His apostles while here in the world,
This is the message I heard:
"Lovest thou me?" He seemed to say,
As He did to Peter on that other day.
"Yea, Lord." And as I looked in His face,
I thought surely 'tis true, there's no other
place
Where my soul can find rest
Except in the Son of Righteousness.
And as I thought of what **He** is to **me**

I thought of those who do not see
In Him, their Lord, Redeemer, and King;
And Oh! how I prayed that He would bring
Them to a realization
Of their lost condition
That at the foot of the Cross they might fall
Pleading for mercy. Then to all
We can hear Him say:
"Be thou clean" from this very day.
They that are happiest in the world, we find,
Are those that follow the closest behind
The Master. Of all the tasks that I would
choose

'Tis the one of carrying the glad news
To those who have **never, never heard**
Of the love of Jesus, through His Word.
Think what it cost the Father above
As He manifested His **wonderful love**
In giving His only Son to die
That we might live with Him on High.
Think at what **terrible, terrible cost**
Salvation is purchased for the lost.
Oh! that men would "look and live,"
Willing, if necessary, their lives to give—
Not for their country, but for their King,
Who left His home in Heaven to bring
The only thing in all the universe
Which from our heads could lift the curse.
May we all have His blood applied
That to us may not be denied
The privilege of seeing Him face to face

And we'll shout with the ransomed,
 "Saved by Grace."

To the dear young people let me say:

"Catch a vision of the world's great need to-
 day;

Then may you pray, "Lord, send me;
I want to follow only Thee.

If in the world there is a place

Where Thou canst use me, give me grace

To follow wherever Thou shalt lead

And may I be true, and loyal, indeed."

E. S. B.

CHAPTER XI.

As this was Edwin and Mildred's last opportunity to talk over their plans for the future, they told Mr. Woodson they would rather walk home; they strolled along planning what they would do Christmas, when Edwin would be home. Mildred tried to appear very cheerful, but in her heart, realizing what it would mean to her to have Marguerite and Edwin both away, she found it hard to put on a brave face. She determined she would spend her time trying to bring happiness to others, and thus forget her own loneliness, and make the time pass more quickly. Edwin felt since he had her promise he could make so much better progress in his studies.

When they reached home, Edwin asked Mildred to sing for him once more before he should go. She went to the piano and sang, "We'll Never Say Goodbye in Heaven," and "God Be With You Till We Meet Again." As the hour was late, Edwin arose to go. It was agreed since their engagement would necessarily be a long one, and since they were to be separated, they were to feel free to have company when it suited them. With a good-bye kiss, Edwin hurried across the street and

ran into the house; his father, mother and Marguerite awaited him. They decided since he would be leaving in a few minutes, they would all stay up; and Marguerite would go with her father to the depot in the car.

When the train had pulled out Edwin waved to his father and Marguerite as long as he could see them. They turned to enter the car and noticing a man, who was a cripple, watching them, Mr. Woodson said, "Neighbor, get in my car and I will take you where you want to go. The man seemed very much embarrassed, but managed to say "thank you," and got in the car. Mr. Woodson asked him where he wanted to go, and he said, "I have no home, and really do not know where I am going." Mr. Woodson suggested that he go to the Union Mission, where he would have a good bed and be taken care of. As the man made no objection, Mr. Woodson drove there and going in with the man, asked the superintendent to take care of him and do what he could for his comfort. Leaving the price of a few nights' lodging and meals with him and suggesting that perhaps he could find the man some kind of work, Mr. Woodson started for home.

The superintendent asked the man his name and where he was from. He replied: "My name is Fred Stewart, but I haven't any

home; at least that I know of. When I left home ten years ago my father and mother lived in Raleigh, N. C., but I haven't heard from them since and do not know that they are still living."

Mr. Marsh, the superintendent, was very kind to him. He took him to the bathroom where, after a hot bath, he gave him clean clothes and led him to a room with a nice, comfortable bed—and, patting him on the shoulder, said: "I am glad Mr. Woodson brought you to us; and I hope we may find your people for you and help you to find work. After you have had a good night's sleep, we will talk further about what plan to pursue," and saying "goodnight," he left him.

As he lay there thinking of the life he had lived for the last ten years, and what his intentions were when Mr. Woodson noticed him watching them, he wondered whether there really was anyone in the world who cared whether he did right or wrong. He had been guilty of nearly every crime you could mention; and tonight had intended robbing the Woodson's when they had reached a less public place; when to his surprise they had invited him to get in their car that they might take him where he wished to go. It was the first time for years anyone had spoken a kind word to him. He felt after their kindness he

couldn't do them any harm, so allowed them to take him to the Mission, for the reason he had no place to go. He began to go over his life. He had always been a wayward boy, and would not listen to his parents as they had tried to keep him from drinking. Ten years ago, when he had gone home drunk, and his father had remonstrated with him, he had picked up a chair and struck at him, just missing him by the fraction of an inch. Then he turned and left the house and swore he would never return. From that time until now, he had not spent one day in honest toil; but stealing his way on freight trains, begging from door to door, spending his nights robbing houses and then gambling with whatever he secured, drinking and carousing. He wondered why this man should have noticed him and spoken kindly to him. He knew he was not worthy the notice of a gentleman; and he kept thinking and wondering why he should have gone out of his way for one such as he. He began to think of his father and mother; and how they had earnestly tried to make a good boy of him; to save his life, he couldn't sleep. He wondered if his parents were still living, and if they would be glad to see him if he should return. He remembered how they had loved him when a little boy; and how he used to go to Sunday School and hear the Bible stories. He thought of the Prodigal Son,

and the words kept ringing in his ears, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him I am not worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." He thought of all the crimes he had committed since he left home; how he had never been a comfort to those that loved him, but had always worried them; and he thought, "I never could have the courage to go home." He got up and walked the floor, as he could not sleep. His room was directly over Mr. Marsh's room, as he always put suspicious looking characters there, so if they did not seem to sleep he might go to them and find out the trouble. Mr. Marsh got up and slipped upstairs, and knocking softly on his door, asked if he might come in. Fred Stewart opened the door, and when Mr. Marsh said, "My friend, what is the matter; are you sick?" he replied, "Worse than sick; I can't forget what a mean man I have been and how dreadfully I treated my old father and mother." Then Mr. Marsh asked him if he was sorry. He said: "I would give my life if I could only make amends for what I have done." Mr. Marsh showed him how Jesus had paid his debt, and how, if he would surrender his will to Him, He would blot out all his transgressions and give him a new start. They knelt together, and after Fred Stewart had prayed for himself, Mr. Marsh poured out his soul in earnest

prayer. When he came to the place where he said, "I will do anything the Lord wants me to do, if He will only forgive me," the Lord heard his prayer and gave him the assurance that he was accepted as His child. He turned to Mr. Marsh and said, "From this time on, I will live a clean life; and will try to lift those with whom I have been associated."

After Mr. Marsh had gone back to his room, Fred began to plan what he would do. The more he thought of his father and mother, the more he wanted to see them; but he was determined he would not go home without first finding work and proving he was a respectable man; so he decided in the morning he would write to his parents telling them how he had lived since leaving home, and ask their forgiveness; and how God had forgiven his sins; and he was going to make a man of himself; from now on they would not be ashamed to own him as their son.

He could hardly wait until morning came. He thought he had better get to sleep so as to present a better appearance before seeking employment; so saying, he closed his eyes and was soon dreaming of the old home and his boyhood days.

CHAPTER XII.

The next morning dawned bright and clear. While Mr. Woodson was at the breakfast table, the telephone rang and Mr. Marsh told him of how the man he had brought to the Mission was converted and was going to start out that morning to find employment. He told him that he had confessed that he was a miserable wretch; he was so ashamed of the way he had treated his father and mother, and would go to them as soon as he had proved himself a man; and he was very anxious to find something to do.

Mr. Woodson told him to send him around to his office and he thought he might be able to help him.

When Fred Stewart appeared before Mr. Woodson that morning, he could hardly recognize him as being the man he had taken to the Mission the night before. He had been very particular in dressing himself, and having first shaved, he presented a very respectable appearance.

Mr. Woodson said to him, "I thought you were a cripple, but you seem to walk all right now."

He told him that he had feigned that guise that he might not be suspected of the crimes which he committed. He also told him how he had planned to hold him up when he reached a secluded spot; how his kindness to him had changed his whole life, for which he expressed his heartfelt gratitude.

Then he repeated what he had told Mr. Marsh of his early life; how the Lord had forgiven him, and how he had written to his father and mother asking their forgiveness. It was his intention, after spending some weeks in honest work, to go home to see them if they were still living.

“What work did you do when you were a young man?”

He replied that he was clerking in a store at the time he left home. Mr. Woodson said, “I am more than glad you have made a complete surrender to the Lord, and I am willing to give you a start. I have a vacancy in the department you speak of, and I will see if you can fill it; you may begin at once, working under the manager, Mr. Price.”

Fred thanked him and said he would do his best to please him; that he could never repay him for his kindness.

When Marguerite arose that morning, she hurried around getting all her clothes in her

trunk and making the necessary changes in her wardrobe—taking with her the things which would make her room in the school seem more like home. She was a little sad as she thought of the separation from those who were so dear to her; and knowing what it would mean to them to have her away. But she felt so pleased that the way had opened for her to go, she went singing from room to room.

Mrs. Woodson was much better than she had been some weeks before, and she felt with Janet there to look after the children, they would get along nicely. Janet had moved over that morning, and Marguerite was helping her to get settled in the room adjoining the children's. She had made everything as cozy and pleasant as possible, and they had just put on the finishing touches, when the door bell rang and Marguerite hurried down to the door. She was surprised to find Mr. Douglass there. He told her he had just come over to say goodbye; he was leaving on the noon train for his home; after spending a few days with his mother, he would enter the Louisville Seminary.

She said, "I am so glad you are to be there this winter, for I am leaving in a few days to enter that Training School." They had become very good friends and each felt they

would be helped by having the companionship and advice of the other; so they had that to look forward to.

Marguerite called her mother, who would want to see Mr. Douglass before he left, as he had been in their home a great deal and they were all very fond of him. Mrs. Woodson wished him the greatest success and told him she would always feel an interest in his work; she hoped to hear from him from time to time as to where he would be sent, when he would sail, etc. As he only had a little time, he said goodbye to Mrs. Woodson; as he pressed Marguerite's hand, he asked her what time she expected to arrive in Louisville. She replied the following Thursday at 3 p. m. He told her he would meet her at the train, for which she thanked him and said she had been dreading going to a strange city with no one she knew to meet her. After he had gone, Marguerite thought, how nice it will be to have him there this winter. Her heart gave a bound, as she thought she would not be entirely among strangers; and the color came to her cheeks as she confessed to herself that she would rather have Charles Douglass there than any one she knew.

The Missionary Society of the church was having a farewell party for Marguerite this evening, and every woman of the church had

been sent an invitation. They had arranged an interesting program to follow the banquet; as each responded to their toasts, it was soon felt that someone had been praying in this church, for they wanted to double their amount to missions. Marguerite and Dorothy Moore told of the happiness they had experienced since they had heard the call of Jesus to go forth in His vineyard, and asked the church to remember them daily in prayer. Many other girls showed by their attitude they were thinking seriously of joining the "Life Service League." Mildred thought she had never attended a party she enjoyed so much; and went home with a prayer on her lips that she might be used to bring light to those that sat in darkness.

CHAPTER XIII.

A month had passed since Edwin went away, and Marguerite had gone a few days later. Mildred had been very lonely, but she made it a point each day to visit someone she might help by her presence, carrying a little sunshine here and there, and she was surprised in how many ways she could help people. There were girls in the shops who looked so tired at the close of the day; and she made it convenient to carry some pretty flowers to them. Sometimes it would be an interesting book to one whom she felt needed something to brighten their life. Then she would take some old lady, who never got away from home, out in her car for a ride in the country; and having her Sunday School class for an evening; the little social affairs of the week, and a thousand other things, time went very rapidly.

She had just come in from a short call on the Thompsons, who lived at the outskirts of the city. Mr. Tucker had found a nice, clean cottage where Mrs. Thompson would have fresh air and they could keep a cow, and have fruit; and he had advised Mr. Thompson to

move his family, and he had gladly done so.

Mr. Tucker had also sent them several pieces of new furniture so their little home was cozy and homelike. Mrs. Thompson was about well and went singing about her home as she prepared their meals and dressed the children for school. It was a pleasure to see what a little kindness and help had meant to them. Mr. Thompson looked years younger; and instead of life being a burden, it was a pleasure as he looked forward to the evenings spent with his family.

When Mildred reached home that evening, she found a letter from one of her college friends asking her to come and visit her. She lived in Florida; Mildred had enjoyed so much a visit there a year ago. She thought it would be lovely to go—but as she thought of the gay time she had while there, she wondered if Evelyn would be disappointed that she did not care for some of the things she had done when there before.

She went to find her mother and talk to her about the invitation before answering. She began to wish her parents would go to Florida for the winter; and after spending a little time with Evelyn, she could join them. Edwin had written her that they were to have such a short vacation, he would not be home

for Christmas. She was disappointed; but she didn't know Edwin felt he must save the money it would take to bring him home, to buy a Christmas present for her. As she began to think of being away, she thought of her class in the Sunday School; and that she would be needed in carrying out the missionary program for Christmas. She decided she would rather not go until after the first of January; then she felt sure it would suit her father better to be away for three or four months. When talking with her mother, they were agreed that would be the time to go, so she wrote her friend telling her they would be in Florida in January and she would see her at that time; thanking her for her invitation and speaking of the lovely time she had when there; but she did not feel she could be spared from her church at this time. Then she told her of her new found happiness, and invited her to spend Christmas with them and share with her the pleasure of seeing some children who had never had a real Christmas, as they beheld their tree and the presents Santa brought them.

Mildred and her mother began to plan for Christmas and how many they would remember this year. Always before they had a long list of friends; to that was added this year many who would enjoy for the first time a

real Christmas. They were so happy as they thought of the happy little faces there would be on this Christmas morning.

Mildred and Mrs. Tucker made a list of the families they would remember, and that afternoon went to the shops, for it would take some time to select all the things they wanted to buy.

Then, too, Mildred meant her Sunday School class to share the pleasure of dressing the dolls and making whatever was to be made for the little ones.

Mildred went to the bank to see her father; as she was coming out she noticed a very fine looking man making a deposit. As she passed him, their eyes met, and she wondered who he could be; she was sure she had never seen him before. Several times that day her mind drifted back to him.

After Mildred had left the bank, this gentleman, Horace Madison, turned to his friend who was standing near him, and inquired if he knew the young lady who had just left the bank. He replied she was Miss Tucker, the daughter of the president of the bank, but he had never had the pleasure of meeting her.

The Madisons were an old Virginia family and were known throughout the state as one

of the most aristocratic and influential families of the South. They did not live in the city; their palatial home on Edgewood Drive, of the old Colonial style, was admired by all who passed and was known by the name of "Ivory Pillars." Horace Madison was the only son, and was the youngest Judge on the Supreme bench. His two sisters were married and living in New York; the only ones at home were his father and mother, and he spent three or four months of the year with them.

While Judge Madison had met all the elite of Washington and other cities, and had been much sought after by many of the fair sex, he had never been in love. He enjoyed the company of ladies and spent many leisure hours with them—but he had never seen the girl he wanted to make his wife. He thought he was immune from Cupid's dart; but today as he rode home in his car, he couldn't for a moment forget the face of Mildred Tucker. He wondered how he might meet her; when he remembered he had an invitation to a dance at one of the homes in Richwood, he determined he would go, as he felt sure she would be there. He was a fine looking man; being six feet tall, weighing 180 lbs., with handsome brown eyes and wavy brown hair. He was a real Southern gentleman and never overlooked any courtesy or attention, which means so much to ladies.

When he arrived at Helen Gould's party and was presented to the guests, his heart sank as he failed to see the one whom he sought. He however determined during the evening to make inquiry of Miss Gould and see if she knew Miss Tucker. He was to have the first dance with Miss Gould; as soon as the opportunity presented itself, he said, "By the way, Miss Gould, are you acquainted with Miss Mildred Tucker?" Helen replied, "Yes, indeed; Mildred and I used to be inseparable until she joined the church; I scarcely ever see her any more. I never saw anyone who seemed so changed after uniting with a church as she is. She is such a beautiful dancer and used to love to dance, but she never attends any more. I think it's a shame to give up all enjoyment just because you are a member of a church. Don't you?"

"That depends on what constitutes pleasure. Perhaps she doesn't see things as she once did—and gets more enjoyment from other things. She surely looks like a happy little somebody."

"Oh! no doubt she is; she told me she wouldn't exchange the happiness she now experiences for all the world. But none of that for me; some day, perhaps, I will change my mind; but I intend to have a good time first."

"How does she spend her time?"

“Well, she never misses Sunday School or church, and on Wednesday evenings you will always find her in prayer meeting. Through the week you will often see her out in her car with some old lady, who hasn’t been out before for years. Then, too, she is always doing something for the girls in the shops; and the poor around the city. I don’t suppose another girl in Richwood is as much loved as Mildred; by all classes, rich and poor, men, women, and children. She had expected to go abroad this fall, but gave it up after her conversion; she felt she was needed here, and then she didn’t want to leave her father for so long. Her mother was to accompany her and they expected to be gone one or two years. She intended finishing her music while away, but Mildred plays and sings beautifully as it is. Her voice is a wonder.”

“Does she attend the church you do?”

“Yes; you should have seen her the night she was baptized. Her face shone like the face of an angel; it was needless for her to say she was happy; you could tell that by looking at her.”

At this time they were interrupted by someone claiming Miss Gould for the next dance. At the earliest possible moment, without being rude, Judge Madison sought Miss Gould and expressed his pleasure at being able to

be present at her party; and asked her if he might accompany her to church on Sunday evening.

Of course Helen was delighted, and he arranged to call for her at 7:45. She thought she would be envied by all the girls; but she didn't know it was not her company he was seeking, but an introduction to Miss Tucker.

As Judge Madison drove home that evening, he wondered if he could wait until Sunday evening. This was Friday, so it would be only two days, but it seemed a long time to him. He couldn't put Mildred out of his thoughts for one minute. He didn't go to sleep for several hours, and when he did it was to dream of going here and there hoping to see her; but was always disappointed. He wondered if, after all these years, he had met the girl he loved and would not be able to win her. Saturday was the longest day of his life; no matter what he attempted to do, he could not interest himself in anything.

At last Sunday evening came and Judge Madison called for Miss Gould, and when they were on their way to church, he felt more composed than he had since the day he first beheld Mildred Tucker. When the usher seated them, it happened he seated them directly behind the Tuckers. For this Horace

was extremely thankful. Mildred, however, was in the choir and didn't notice them come in. The text tonight was, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Everyone that knew the minister loved him; and the house was filled at every service. He made a very strong appeal, and everyone felt their strength renewed, as they were pointed to the source of all help—our Saviour.

At the close of the sermon, Mildred sang "Rock of Ages." She never looked lovelier or sang sweeter. Horace Madison thought he never heard anything so wonderful. Every word was impressed on his memory.

When the benediction was pronounced, Mr. Tucker turned to speak to those near him. When he saw Judge Madison he was very much pleased, and presented him to Mrs. Tucker. Mr. Tucker had known the Madisons a long time, but he didn't remember of seeing any of them at church since he had been attending. Helen Gould came now and then, but not regularly. As they were talking Mildred joined them, and Helen presented Judge Madison. She shook hands with him and remarked she was glad to see him there, and hoped he would come often.

"I certainly will; I never realized how

much I have been missing until tonight."

Then she asked Helen if she would join their Sunday School class; told her of the mission pageant they were going to have, and said they would be glad to have her help in it. She also mentioned that they were going to dress some dolls for some children at Christmas, and asked her if she would like to join them at her house the following evening to start work. Mildred had done everything in her power to interest Helen in church work, and hoped by so doing she would become a Christian.

Helen said she had an engagement for the following evening and could not come, as much as she would like to.

They had reached the door and Judge Madison said, "Miss Tucker, if you are not engaged for Tuesday evening, may I call and inspect your work?" She replied, "On one condition; that you dress one of the dolls." This he promised to do, and they parted with the understanding that he would be there Tuesday evening and do his part in dressing dolls.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Woodsons had at last become somewhat accustomed to having Marguerite away from home, although at first they felt they could not keep house without her.

Janet had proved herself a jewel; Mrs. Woodson felt what a comfort it was to have someone take such interest in the children. She was not only a help to them in their lessons, but spent much time amusing them and training them. They loved her dearly, and ran to her as they did to Marguerite with all their troubles and all their joys.

Marguerite had written often; had spoken of the lovely spirit of the school; and said the training was just what she needed to go out in the missionary service. They had the practical experience of working among the foreigners; she told of a number of instances where she had been able to bring comfort to destitute homes. She spoke of Mr. Douglass, and said they spent Saturday afternoons in work where they both could have a part. Also of the Sunday School in the slums, where he was superintendent and she taught a class. "It seems so much more like home to see someone you know, and we enjoy very much tak-

ing our difficulties to each other for counsel.

“I am more and more in love with my work; and am looking forward to the time when I shall be ready to sail for Russia, where the poor Jewish people are enduring such hardships. The Russians I have met who are Christians are of the **very best**, and will endure anything for the cause of Christ; so I have felt that this is the place I hope to serve Him.

“I am so glad to hear all the nice things Mildred is doing. No one will ever know all the good she does, for she never speaks of it unless she wishes to interest someone else in the work, as in the case of the dolls. I am glad she is training our girls to work for others. I am looking forward to being home Christmas, and hope to see the missionary pageant they are preparing. It won't be long now until I see you. Am so sorry Edwin is not going to be home. Is it really because the time is so short, or has he other reasons?”

Mr. Woodson came in at this time, and Mrs. Woodson handed him Marguerite's letter. He was always so pleased to receive Marguerite's letters; they came twice a week. Edwin, too, had been good about writing, and their letters were a source of great comfort.

Today Edwin had told them of an invitation from a college friend to spend Christmas with him in Boston; he had accepted the invitation, as he couldn't be at home. Said he was getting along fine in his studies, and felt sure now he would finish college this year.

As they sat at the dinner table that evening, the subject of conversation was Edwin's Christmas box. They would have to get it ready at once, for next week was Christmas and it might be delayed in transit when the mails were so heavy.

They were all so happy talking of it, and of Marguerite's coming; Richard, Robert and Ruth were almost beside themselves; Janet was to take them down street after they had finished their dinner, to make their Christmas purchases. They were each given two dollars, and they thought they could buy out the store with that much money.

After they had gone, Mrs. Woodson made her fingers fly in dressing a beautiful doll for Ruth. She looked up and said, "How is Fred Stewart getting along?" Mr. Woodson replied that he was doing fine. "I am certainly glad I trusted that man and gave him a place, for he is making good. I think he expects to go home to spend Christmas with his parents. He has been saving every cent and has bought

his mother a good black silk dress and his father a suit of clothes, to take to them. I wish I could be behind the door when he meets them."

"It will be a day of rejoicing when the prodigal son returns. I am so glad for that mother that her son is living right."

"I told him he could take a week off."

"It pays to be kind to strangers; I often wonder what might have become of you and Marguerite if you hadn't invited him to ride with you; and to think, by your kindness he was led to the Saviour?"

They heard the children coming, so Mrs. Woodson hurried to hide the doll and bring the box they were going to pack for Edwin. They had promised the children they would wait until they returned, so they could help.

There was the fruit cake, the big box of home-made candy; ties, handkerchiefs, hose, a folding umbrella, slippers, a Masonic ring, and, best of all, mother's picture in a handsome frame. Mrs. Woodson hadn't had any pictures made for years, and they had prevailed upon her to have some taken, and surprise Edwin and Marguerite. They all knew that was the present that would please Edwin most. Then the children put in their gifts,

of which they were so proud. Robert had bought a knife; Richard thought checkers were better, and Ruth was sure he would like her book best of all. It is needless to say, when Edwin received the box, being his first Christmas away from home, and saw the gifts from the children, carrying with them so much love, his heart was touched and he prized them as if they had been worth their weight in gold, and put them away to keep forever.

After they had finished the box and Janet had taken the children to bed, a messenger boy came with a telegram from Marguerite, saying they would reach home the next day at 12. They could hardly wait until morning, they longed so to see her. It was the first time in her life she had been away from home for so long. Mrs. Woodson felt now she needn't worry about not having things ready for the children's Christmas, for when Marguerite came she would soon get things done.

CHAPTER XV.

The night before Christmas had come at last. Mr. Tucker ordered five Christmas trees sent out to certain families, all boxed ready to be set up; and Mildred had been busy all day putting on the ornaments and getting them ready for Santa Claus to put on the presents. She never spent a busier or happier day as she went from place to place and saw the delight of the children; the first time, in some of the homes, they were to have a Christmas tree. She was to go that evening with the presents, and had them all tied up in separate packages, ready to deliver at each door.

She not only had the gifts for the children, but some nice, warm clothing for the mothers; sweaters, shawls, hose, coats, dresses and shoes.

The girls of her class had been at her home nearly every evening dressing dolls; and, true to his word, Judge Madison had dressed one, which was pretty well done. He had been very slow, and didn't finish it in one evening, so of course he went back again. In fact, he had made it convenient to be there several times since Sunday, and Mildred had enter-

tained him with the girls as they prepared things for the trees. She admired him very much, and found him excellent company; but she never spent an evening in his company alone. She began to look forward to his coming; then she would force herself to put him out of her mind. She wondered sometimes if it wasn't a mistake for a girl, after she was engaged, to have other callers. Determining to be true to Edwin, she would think of him as little as possible.

Judge Madison had found Mildred all he had hoped, and more. He was wild about her—and longed for the time to come when he might tell her of his love. He was to call Christmas afternoon, and he kept asking himself the question if it were too soon to speak to her concerning the thing uppermost in his mind.

Tonight, as Mildred loaded the car with the packages, her mother said, "Had I better go with you, Mildred?" and she replied, "No, mother; you might get all the packages ready and finish our own tree. John is so trustworthy; I think it is perfectly safe for me to go with him. I won't be gone very long, and when I come back we will have a good time putting our things on the tree."

Since Mildred was a little girl she had always

had a tree, and it wouldn't seem like Christmas without it; so there in the living room was a beautiful tree with all the gifts that had come by mail to be opened Christmas morning.

She waved her hand and started, saying she didn't think she would be gone more than an hour, or two at the longest.

She told John where to drive, and took the nearest homes first. She had been to all but two, and thought they were getting along fine. The next home was in a deserted part of the town and some distance from the street. Mildred told John that he had better stay in the car, as the things were not heavy and she would only be gone a few moments.

She hurried in, and as soon as the door closed behind her, two men appeared. John had not seen or heard anyone, and turned to see where they came from. Just then he was dealt a blow on the head which rendered him unconscious. He was dragged from the car and these men carried him some little distance further, where there was a stream that flowed into the river, just below. They threw him in there and thought that would be the last of him. Another man had stepped into the car and was waiting, as John had been doing, for Mildred to return.

When she came, she said: "John, it took a

little longer there; the children were asleep, and the mother wanted me to help put the presents on the tree. She was so perfectly nappy, I could hardly get away from her. Just one more place now, and we are ready to go home."

They drove to the Thompson's, and Mildred unloaded the rest of the presents. She thought it strange that John didn't offer to carry them in, as he always did, but supposed it was because she had told him to sit in the car at the other house.

As they were not heavy, she ran in to the door and left them, not waiting to hear the words of appreciation from Mrs. Thompson, for she knew how hard it was to get away, when they caught sight of the gifts. She was anxious to get back home and get her things out for her father and mother. She had mailed Edwin's box several days ago; had sent her box over to the Woodsons, and to all her girl friends. The Christmas greetings had all been mailed, so she felt everything was in readiness for the happiest Christmas she had ever spent.

When she reached the car she said, "Now for home, John." He turned as if to go home, but at the very first side street, which was very dark, he turned and was driving very

fast. She began to think then something was wrong, and said: "John, this is not the way." He made no reply, but drove faster and faster. She was wondering what she should do, when the driver seemed to slow up a little and she would jump out; but instead, two men got in and seated themselves on either side of her. They told her if she kept quiet they would not harm her, but if she didn't they would kill her. Mildred breathed a prayer to "Him who will never leave us or forsake us," and she felt she could place her life in His hands. Of course she was frightened, but when she prayed, it seemed that someone stood by her side and said: "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; Oh! be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee by the right hand of my righteousness." After that she said to herself, I will not fear.

She began to wonder what had become of John, for she saw by this time that the driver was a stranger, and it was a plot to secrete her away. She wondered how soon her people would become alarmed and search for her; and prayed that they would very soon. She knew her father well enough to know that he would have all detectives he could get on the job, and nothing would be left undone to find her. She thought of the lovely Christmas they had expected to have, and she couldn't

keep the tears from falling in her lap. They hadn't driven very long when they came to a stream and drove down into it. They followed the stream some little distance to a secluded spot; they took hold of her and began to get her out. She didn't know where they were taking her, and she was so frightened she could hardly walk; but up on the side hill they came to a cave and one of the men went inside and lighted a candle, and she saw it was occupied by a lot of outlaws. They said to her, "Make yourself as comfortable as you can. We will not harm you if you do not try to get away; and even if you do, it will be no use, for we have guards stationed all around here."

They gave her a cot to rest on. She examined it and found the sheets were clean. She didn't expect to sleep but she thought she would pretend to them she did, that she might think what was best to do. They stepped outside, and she knelt and prayed aloud, asking God to forgive these men, "For they know not what they do"; she prayed for their mothers and sisters who might this night be in trouble too.

They were listening to see what she would do; and one of the men, when he heard that prayer, felt his heart of stone melt, and he said: "Boys, listen to that little girl in there

praying for us! Let's take her home and give up this awful way of living?" The others swore and called him a coward, and said they would not lose this chance they had so long sought of making a big haul. They said: "When old man Tucker puts up his million, we will restore her: otherwise we will not!"

CHAPTER XVI.

Mrs. Tucker went to the door to see if she could see anything of the car. She had been to the door time and again in the last half-hour. At last she said to Mr. Tucker, "I am almost beside myself because Mildred doesn't come. She thought she would be back in an hour; not later than two at the most—and it is now nearly three hours."

Mr. Tucker replied, "If she were with anyone but John, I would be worried; but John is so trustworthy, I am sure it has taken longer than she thought. However, if she isn't here in fifteen minutes, I will go to hunt for her."

In about ten minutes Mr. Tucker rang the bell. When the servant appeared he said: "Ned, bring the electric around to the door."

He said to Mrs. Tucker, "It isn't necessary to say anything to the servants until I go to the homes where Mildred expected to go; then if I do not find her, I will 'phone the police and put detectives on the trail. Surely she has been detained longer than she expected at some of the homes." So saying, he hurried away.

He went to each home and inquired if his daughter had been there and how long since

she had left; when he found it had been so long, he began to fear that something had happened; and he drove like mad to reach the last house. Mr. Thompson told him she had been gone an hour and a half. Then Mr. Tucker immediately called police headquarters. He told them to send at once the best detectives they had to 846 Staunton Road, and as many policemen as they could. He also asked that the bloodhounds be sent to this place, and not to lose a minute, as he felt sure Mildred Tucker had met with foul play.

In less than twenty minutes there were six policemen and three detectives there. Mr. Tucker walked the floor until they arrived. He told them Mildred had been out delivering Christmas parcels to the five homes; and that this was one of the last ones visited; it had been an hour and a half—nearly two now—since she had left there. He gave them the number of the car, which was a Packard, and described the driver as a white man about 40 years of age, five feet eight inches tall, weight 150 lbs., with blue eyes and hair streaked with grey. He told them he would have trusted that man anywhere; and he felt sure some fatality had happened him, for he would have saved Mildred at the cost of his own life.

After the men had started, Mr. Tucker 'phoned Mrs. Tucker that he had a lot of peo-

ple searching; that she could start the servants out in every place where John might go. That he had bloodhounds on the trail, and he felt they would soon find them.

When the hounds started, they followed the trail until they came to the stream, but there they lost it. Several times they started them again, and each time they went the same way. They had the stream dragged, and they crossed over and went for miles on the other side; they feared they could not take up the trail again, and thought they might have changed autos there. They went to each depot and inquired if anyone had noticed a lady in company with some men, or one man, going away on the train. The agent told them there had been four men and one woman who wore a veil, boarded the train there and bought tickets to Chicago. The authorities at Chicago were immediately notified to be on the lookout for this party.

Mr. Tucker next called the daily papers and asked them to get out an early edition telling of the disappearance of Mildred Tucker; offering \$5,000 reward for any information that would lead to finding her. All night long they searched. Mr. Thompson had started out as soon as Mr. Tucker had come, and was as much concerned as if it had been his own child. All the men at the other homes visited

by her had joined the searching party, and, in fact, everyone that heard of it started out, hoping to be able to do something; for there wasn't anyone in the city who was loved more than Mildred Tucker.

Poor Mrs. Tucker almost collapsed, as the hours went by and no word. She walked the floor and wrung her hands and prayed and grieved that she hadn't gone with her; she felt she could not stand another moment of suspense. Then she prayed, "Lord, give me faith to believe you will take care of my child."

Mr. Tucker had sent a trained nurse to be with Mrs. Tucker. As the newsboys called the papers, "All about the disappearance of Mildred Tucker," those who had not heard bought a copy and the whole city was in sorrow.

Judge Madison had left several Christmas packages in his office which he wanted to send out early, so he arose earlier than usual and drove into the city. As he reached the outskirts, he heard the cry of a newsboy and his heart almost stopped beating. He grabbed a paper and hastily scanned the headlines, and then the particulars concerning her disappearance. He drove immediately to Mr. Tucker's. Found Mr. Tucker had never been home but

was scouring the country. Mrs. Tucker came forward, so white she looked like a ghost. As Judge Madison took her hand, she fell in a dead faint; he caught her in his arms and gently laid her on the couch, and prayed the first prayer that had been on his lips for years. As the nurse applied the restoratives, Mrs. Tucker opened her eyes. "Any news yet?" she inquired. Just then Marguerite Woodson came in and told Mrs. Tucker that John had been found on the river bank almost dead; but that he felt sure Mildred was living. He told them how he had been struck on the head, after which he knew nothing until he was thrown in the water. He presumed the men thought he was about dead, and would drown when they threw him into the stream, but the water had caused him to regain consciousness; and after some time he had been able to get hold of something by which he dragged himself on to the bank; but being weak, he again lost consciousness and didn't know anything until the men had found him about day break.

He was in a serious condition and had been rushed to the hospital, where he would receive the best of care. While this news did not relieve their minds in regard to Mildred, there was a ray of hope that she was at least among the living.

Judge Madison said he would join the searchers; and Mrs. Tucker remembered that Marguerite had never met Judge Madison, so she presented him to her, and said, "This is Mildred's dearest friend."

His heart was so full, he simply acknowledged the introduction, and turning to Mrs. Tucker said: "Don't give up; and, remember, if money has any weight, we will surely find your daughter; and no means shall be spared to find her." He was very pale and looked anxious. When Marguerite looked at him, she knew in him Edwin had a rival; for he showed he was desperately in love with Mildred.

CHAPTER XVII.

All day long the search continued; but no trace had been found. At nine o'clock Mr. Tucker came home utterly exhausted. He had not eaten anything all day, and he wanted to keep on searching, but the men had persuaded him to go home to his wife, and rest; they would let him know the first news or trace of her that could be found.

Judge Madison had gone to him and told him his wife needed him—and to leave it to him to direct and he would leave no stone unturned to restore his daughter to him, and to bring to justice the guilty parties. Mr. Tucker would have given every cent he had to have Mildred safe in his arms, and intended to increase the reward offered, but thought best to make it \$5,000 at first, and later, if no word came, to make it more.

Going over to the couch where Mrs. Tucker was lying, he fell on his knees and, with her hand in his, implored the Father above to protect and restore their daughter.

Of course the news of the disappearance of so prominent a girl as Mildred Tucker was copied in all the leading newspapers; and everything was done to find any trace of her,

but to no avail.

Fred Stewart had left Richwood on the 24th at 2 a. m. and reached Raleigh about 10:30 p. m. What a happy home-coming it was! His father and mother had counted the hours until their boy, who was so dear to them for so many years, was to be restored to them. They talked most of the night; and when he presented to them the gifts he had brought them, tears of joy ran down their cheeks. They saw how he had worked and saved that he might bring this token of love to them. Then, too, they were both in need of new clothes—and didn't know where the money was to come from to buy them. They went to bed with happy hearts, so glad they were to have him with them for a week. Fred had told them so much about Mr. Woodson and his family, and how good they had been to him. He had also spoken of Mr. Tucker; and said no one but himself knew, but Mr. Tucker had given him a lift when he was down and out. When Mr. Woodson had spoken to Mr. Tucker of Fred, and how he was saving his money in order to go home to his father and mother and prove himself a man, Mr. Tucker had sent him a note that he wanted to see him.

He went to his private office at the bank, and Mr. Tucker had said to him, "I under-

stand that you are working hard and mean to make amends for all the evil you have done. I always like to help a man like that; so I am placing to your credit here in the bank \$100.00 as a nest egg."

Fred said one hundred dollars looked like a fortune to him then, when he didn't have a cent in the world; that, having this start, he had been able to use from his salary enough to buy his mother a silk dress and his father a suit of clothes, and had a little left besides. Mrs. Stewart said: "God works in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform." She said, "Indeed God has been good to us that you should have fallen among such good people, and I can never show them how grateful I am."

The next morning, as the newsboy came with the paper, Fred picked it up. Almost the first thing he saw was the awful news of Mildred Tucker's disappearance. The paper fell from his hands as he stood gazing into space; turning around, he said, "What time does the first train leave here for Richwood?" He handed the paper to them and said, "That is the daughter of the man of whom I was telling you last night. I may be able to find some trace of her, and I must go at once." Fred thought since he knew so many of the rogues and their places of hiding, that he would be on the inside; as he

thought of how the hounds had gone to that stream, he remembered a cave where the gang of outlaws often went; and he could hardly wait until he reached Richwood. However, he knew he must go very slow, and not arouse suspicion. The men would have different ones watching, so he would first go to his home, and then to Mr. Tucker, and tell him of this cave and ask his advice as to the best way to go about rounding up this band of thieves. Of course, they might have left there, but he was pretty sure that was where they had taken her in the first place.

When he reached home he drove directly to Mr. Tucker's home. Mr. Tucker was in the living room lying on the couch; when Fred went in he jumped up, thinking it was news of Mildred.

Fred told him he probably didn't remember him, but he had once befriended him. Then he said, "I saw in the paper at Raleigh, N. C., yesterday, the tragedy of Miss Tucker's disappearance, and I came on the first train, as, having been a crook myself, I know the dens of hiding, and thought I might be of service to you in finding her."

Then he told him of a cave where a band of outlaws often hid; and he thought more than likely, that was where they had taken her.

Mr. Tucker was excited and wanted to go at once; but Fred said to him, "You know we must go slow and wait until we have our plans laid, so that we can not only rescue your daughter, but round up these fellows and break up this awful business."

Mr. Tucker had found a note under his door with no name signed, saying if they would deposit one million dollars at a certain place his daughter would be restored to him. Money was no object if he could only find his daughter, but the detectives said to him, "Wait a day or two, and see if we can round up this den of thieves, before you deliver any money." It now seemed that a man had come who might do much toward capturing them. Mr. Tucker called up the office and asked that one of them come to his house right away. When he came, Mr. Tucker said, "Here is a man who more than likely can lead us to the place of hiding of my daughter." After talking it over, it was agreed that they would get the men together and tonight, about one o'clock, they would entirely surround the cave; there could be no escape if they found them still there.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The first real sorrow that had entered the Woodson home came at this time. While their hearts were stirred about Mildred's disappearance, a telegram came announcing the sudden death of Edwin.

The family had known Edwin was not strong, but they did not know that he had inherited heart trouble from his mother, and that any shock was liable to result fatally. Edwin had been overtaxing his strength by studying too hard; and while in Boston spending his Christmas vacation, he read of the abduction of Mildred Tucker. The shock was too much for him and, without speaking, he sank to the floor, dead.

Everything was done that could be to revive him, but it was beyond human power. God had called him to his reward; and as the family looked back over his young life, they felt he had a mansion in the skies, which he had been building since a little boy. His life had not been in vain; what a comfort it was to those who loved him that he had always been a help to all with whom he came in contact.

His friend, Paul Spilman, had wired he would accompany his remains home, reaching Richwood the next day.

The Woodsons were bowed down with grief, but they looked to Him "Who doeth all things well," and found much comfort in the fact that he had gone to a better home, even though he would be so sadly missed in their family circle.

The scheme to surround the cave had been successful and they had been able to entrap the whole band of outlaws and to rescue Mildred without putting up the money demanded. There was great danger of a lynching, the city was so stirred over the affair; but Judge Madison persuaded them to let the law take its course and he assured the people these men would get their just deserts.

Mildred succeeded in having one man pardoned who had befriended her and kept the rest from in any way mistreating her. He was the one who had suggested to the rest that she be restored to her parents and who had been ridiculed as being a coward.

Her prayer had gone to his heart and he had told her that this was his last time to enter into such devilish work, but from this time on he meant to be a man and live a Christian life.

Even in her suffering God had made it work for good, for she had been able to "save a soul from death." He afterwards became a great worker in the Salvation Army, working to save such criminals as he had been.

The following day the church was packed with friends who had come to pay their last respects to the memory of Edwin Woodson.

Mildred's heart was almost broken as she thought of the few short months of their engagement and how the tragedy of her life had caused his death! She felt proud that she should have been honored with the love of such a noble man.

Beautiful floral tributes showed the esteem in which he was held by all who knew him.

After the funeral was over and the family had returned home, Marguerite said, "I cannot go back to school just now. I think I shall wait until next fall before I leave you, mother." She felt the family needed her and she stayed to help the family bear this sorrow, because they needed her presence.

The bond of love between Mildred and Marguerite grew stronger as together they carried flowers to lay on the grave of Edwin and talked of the things of the past.

CHAPTER XIX.

Twelve years have passed since the great tragedy in Mildred Tucker's life. For ten years her life has been a happy dream as the wife of Judge Madison.

Let us glance in the living room at "Ivory Pillars" and see her as she sits in her easy chair with the little ones perched on the arms of her chair and at her feet; we wonder what could add to her happiness, since her home has been blessed with four little ones. Horace II, Marguerite, Bradford Tucker and little Evelyn. She is telling them the story of the first Christmas, when the shepherds were watching their flocks by night; when the angels appeared unto them with the glad tidings, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill to men; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

As Horace Madison looked over his paper at the beautiful picture before him, his heart swelled with pride. The lovely character of his wife was like a perfect bud, which grew more beautiful as it unfolded. She was his ideal; and with the four little tots, he felt God had indeed been good to him.

As the Judge and his wife gazed into the faces of their own happy children, they thought of the little ones in other homes with little to brighten their lives; and much time was given in bringing happiness to them.

Horace Madison had become a Christian before they were married and their lives mean much to the church to which they belong as well as to the community in which they live. Their influence does not stop with their own home, church, or community. They are so glad to be represented on the foreign field by Charles and Marguerite Douglass, and each year they add another to their list by assuming their support. It has always been Mildred's prayer that God would call some of her own children in special service to Himself, and already little Marguerite is talking of when she is a missionary, like Aunt Marguerite.

Charles and Marguerite Douglass sailed for Russia eight years ago and Mildred has letters quite often telling her of the joy they experience in their work, and of the many hungry hearts for the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and how, when they became Christians, they will endure all kinds of persecution and hardships for the sake of Him "who loved them and gave Himself for them."

Marguerite also told of the cheery letters she has had from Dorothy Moore, who is in India,

and of the great joy she has in telling the good news to the poor little widows there.

The Woodson family are still living at the old home, which has been remodeled and made very attractive. Robert and Richard have finished college—and Ruth is only one year behind them. Robert is to study medicine and Richard is to enter the Theological Seminary this fall to prepare for the ministry. Mr. and Mrs. Woodson are looking forward to next spring when Marguerite and Charles with their two children will be home on a furlough.

Janet is living with the Madisons; her experience in the Woodson home has added much to her efficiency; and Mildred feels she is a great help in training her little ones.

Mr. and Mrs. Tucker are very proud of their grandchildren and never tire of having them in their home. In fact, they never miss a day of either driving to "Ivory Pillars" or of having them with them at "Maple Terrace."

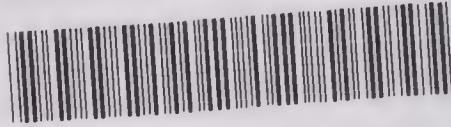
Fred Stewart is now in business for himself, he has been very successful, and has always been true to our Lord. He began by laying aside his tithe for the Lord, and now he has increased it to one-fourth of his income. He has made a comfortable home for his father and mother, with whom he lives.

He never forgot Mr. Woodson's kindness to him, and made provision in his will for Marguerite, Richard, Robert and Ruth.

This is Christmas eve, and Janet has taken the little ones up to bed. Mildred is putting the presents on the tree; her mind goes back to the Christmas eve which meant such sorrow to her. As she looks back over the years, she sees the hand of God in it all, and softly sings, "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow."

The End.

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